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VINE AND ITS FRUIT,

MORE ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO

THE PRODUCTION OF WINE:

EMBRACING

In Historical and Descriptive Account of the Grape,

ITS CULTURE AND TREATMENT IN ALL COUNTRIES,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

DRAWN FROM THE BEST AUTHORITIES.

AND INCORPORATING

A BRIEF DISCOURSE ON WINE.

BY JAMES L. DENMAN.



'I pr'ythee take the cork out of thy mouth,
That I may drink thy tidings.'—*As You Like It.*

LONDON:

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, & GREEN.

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'Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!
The gift of Maron of Evanthous' line,
Which, now some ages from his race conceal'd,
The hoary sire in gratitude reveal'd.
Such was the wine,—to quench whose fervent steam,
Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
To cool one cup sufficed: the goblet crown'd
Breath'd aromatic fragrances around.'

ODYSSEY, b. ix.



LONDON

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NEW-STREET SQUARE

PREFATORY NOTE.

It is with feelings of great satisfaction that I presume to invite public notice to this new and enlarged edition of *A Brief Discourse on Wine*. The gratifying reception accorded to that little volume on its publication, and the flattering notice bestowed on it by a considerable portion of the public press, induced a desire on my part to render the work more perfect and complete. The additional information now supplied may serve to extend its utility, and possess sufficient novelty and interest to make it worthy of attention and perusal.

It will, doubtless, be readily perceived that the task was one involving both time and patient labour; and as the pressure of business left me but little leisure for research, I gladly availed myself of the willing aid of a valued relative, to whose zealous co-operation most of the new matter contained in these pages is due.

It is earnestly hoped that this humble effort at improvement will meet with renewed indulgence and favour; and that the *Vine*, now replanted and extended, may put forth its blossoms afresh, and *its Fruit* prove sound, abundant, and refreshing.

J. L. DENMAN.

LONDON: December 1863.





INTRODUCTION.

THE policy of the British Government having by recent legislation been fairly directed towards measures tending to promote an increased consumption of foreign wines in this kingdom, a new era is opening for the daily use and enjoyment by all classes of that refreshing beverage. For generations past, high and prohibitive fiscal duties had served to exclude the lighter wines of Europe, and the people being thus limited to the knowledge of a few leading and expensive sorts, their taste and judgment were much contracted, if not perverted. Yet no production of the soil, perhaps, demands more uniform care and forethought than the grape, to make it yield in full perfection. Nor should this be matter of doubt or surprise when the many delicate circumstances which affect the health of the vine and the quality of the fruit are fairly considered. A single year of slovenly cultivation, an injudicious mode of training or pruning, an untimely season of frost, or rain, or blight, may deteriorate for years the properties of any particular growth. Carelessness, too, in harvesting the fruit, negligence in the manipulations and subsequent process, imperfect fermentation, unskilful treatment of the must,

unclean casks or inadequate storage, to say nothing of the frequent poverty and ignorance of the farmers themselves,—all tend to modify the strength and virtues of the product, and so multiply the sources of uncertainty, that uniform quality is not attainable even by cultivators of the highest repute.

To herald the emancipation of hilarious Bacchus from fiscal shackles of more than a century and a half's duration, neither senatorial eloquence nor sanguine anticipations were wanting, and England's parliament responded with earnest sympathy and applause. It could not be gainsaid, that the substitution of a cheap and wholesome beverage would do more to wean an industrial people from confirmed habits of inebriety than all the custom-house restrictions or Maine liquor laws in the world. The expansion thus wisely inaugurated for the increase of commercial activity in wines, will doubtless promote the importation of vintages hitherto unavailable or unknown in this country; and as sound and timely suggestions in aid of a true appreciation and judicious selection for private use may be appropriate and serviceable at such a juncture, this slight attempt to elucidate succinctly and correctly some of the chief points connected with a subject of so much interest is respectfully proffered to an indulgent public.

LONDON: *January* 1861.

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THE
VINE AND ITS FRUIT,
THEIR
Culture and Produce in all Countries.



SECTION I.

Early Origin & Description of the Vine.



THE invention of wine, like the origin of many other important arts, is enveloped in the obscurity of the remotest ages of the world; but in the history of ancient nations it has been commonly ascribed to those chiefs and heroes who contributed most to advance and civilize their respective countries, and to whom divine honours were often rendered in acknowledgment of the benefits which they had conferred on mankind. Without dwelling on the fabulous traditions handed down on the subject, it may be sufficient to observe, that the use of wine could not have remained long unknown to those portions of the globe where the vine freely grows. Bacchus, the son of Jupiter and Semele, after his training by the Nysæan nymphs at their mountain dwelling in Arabia, or as others suppose on the banks of the Indus, is said to have traversed nearly the

whole known world, introducing the culture of the grape, and diffusing refinement wherever he went. In old mythologies he is stated to have revealed so many things useful to mankind, that he was universally accorded a distinguished place among the pagan gods. To him they attributed the invention of wine, the method of making honey, tilling the earth, commerce and navigation, with many other arts and social benefits. He was a great lawgiver, having conquered India and subdued the Egyptians, who honoured him as a deity under the name of Osiris; hence his history became allied to their traditions concerning that ancient ruler, and from this source the Greeks borrowed their notions of him. As he was the god of vintage, of wine, and of topers, he is usually depicted crowned with vine and ivy-leaves, with a thyrsus in his hand. The panther is sacred to him, because he went on his expedition covered with the skin of that animal. He often appears naked, and riding upon the shoulders of Pan, or in the arms of Silenus, who was his foster-father. He is said to have married Ariadne, when forsaken by Theseus at the isle of Naxos, in the Grecian Archipelago, which is still in repute for the excellence of its wines and fruits.

The general characteristics of the vine are familiar to every one. The fruit, differing in flavour, form, and size, is mostly sweet, often luscious in taste; but there are species diminutive in shape, and of a harsh and disagreeable flavour. The grape also varies much in colour, from a rich violet to a jet black, or a white, green, or golden hue. This distinction resides wholly in the skin, the pulp of every kind, save one variety, having the same internal tint. Although the general qualities of the plant are the same in all countries, the

fruit it produces is greatly dependent upon external influences. Colour and size, form and taste, aroma and product, vary in so remarkable a manner, as might lead us to regard the vine as a peculiar gift of a bounteous and all-protecting Creator :

“ Tender in shoot, but large of leaf and stem,
Its purple fruit, delicious to the taste,
Produces wine to cheer the heart of man,—
To heal the sick, and to support the weak,—
To comfort all ! ”

Next to wheat, there seems to be no plant so universal. Its varieties are very numerous, and may be observed not only in grapes that abound in different parts of the earth, but even in those growing in the same country, and raised on the same spot. A like variance, indeed, though less strongly marked, may be perceived in fruit of the same vine. Protect one cluster from too great exposure to the sun, and cover it with a bell of dark glass, or with oiled paper, and leave another exposed, and you will obtain a much higher-scented product in the former than in the latter. It is not strange, therefore, that the grapes which grow on the sunny side of Johannisberg, for instance, should be very superior, so far as flavour and fragrance are concerned, to those raised on the opposite side of the mountain, nor that, in general, a more piquant and stronger wine is produced in warm regions than in such as are cold or temperate. If we add to this that the peculiarity of soil, its constituents, the influx and drainage of water, the lightness or stiffness of the ground in which the roots spread, and further, that the dryness or humidity of the air, and the change or equality of temperature, exercise a sensible influence upon the plant and its fruit, a

general idea may be formed of the multiple character of the juice that constitutes the principal element in this grateful product, upon the excellence and perfection of which the goodness of the wine mainly depends.

Nature has endowed the earth with a universal and almost inexhaustible power of raising the necessaries of life; but she has curtailed within precise and moderate limits the ready production of luxuries. It is a well-known physical fact, that although the vine is distributed over one-third of the globe, the wines of each locality bear a peculiar and distinctive character. When transplanted from a southern to a northern latitude its quality soon becomes impaired, but it improves when carried to a warm climate; and no attempt hitherto made to transport a particular species to another country has ever been attended with such a measure of success, as to reproduce in the new site precisely the same distinctive properties that signalized it in the old. Whatever care may be bestowed to select an identity of nutrition, aspect, and climate, the grape on removal loses its former special and peculiar attributes. Vines taken from France, Germany, and the Peninsula to the Cape and Australia, furnished wines totally different from their previous growth, and no European plant retains its identity when transferred to American ground. The wine of one and the same stock which gave Hock upon the Rhine, became Bucellas in Portugal, and Sercial in Madeira. The vine that supplies Port on the hills above the Douro, gives a totally different wine in the vicinity of the Tagus. The vine district of the Rheingau is but nine miles in length, by half as many broad. The wines of Burgundy and the Garonne take their names respectively from circum-

scribed spots; and so narrow and seemingly capricious are their several limits, that a ditch divides portions whose produce from time immemorial has been sought with avidity, from others that uniformly bring but one-fifth the price of its more favoured neighbour. The costly Clos Vougeot grows on a farm of eighty acres; that of Romanée Conti is but six and a half; and the famous Montrachet of the Côte d'Or is separated into three classes, of which one sells at one-third less than the best of the other two, and the second at one-half that of the first: yet these varying qualities are raised from spots of ground divided from each other only by a footpath; they have the same aspect, and apparently the same soil, in which the same vine is planted, and managed precisely in the same way. Art and science have been exerted to extend the bounds thus prescribed by nature with results but little satisfactory, for the choicest wine of any known vineyard has never been successfully reproduced beyond it. The red wines of Portugal grown in the Alto Douro can no more be made in the adjoining provinces of the Minho or Beira, than the white wines of Spain could be practically imitated on the banks of the Rhine. This intractability may possibly be attributable in some measure to the peculiar nature of the substratum which the several roots happen to penetrate. Hence it is manifest, that it is not more owing to the species of plant, than it is to the character and quality of the soil and climate where the grape is grown, that wines are indebted for the peculiarities of flavour, fragrance, and general excellence.

The vine is a hardy plant, and will grow so far north that it can do no more than blossom. It decreases in size with the decline of temperature when raised in

open grounds. The climate most congenial to its nature extends from the 35th to the 50th degree of latitude, and it is between these points that the most esteemed plantations, and the countries richest in wine, are placed. But wherever the grape will ripen, in any quarter of the globe, its juice can be fermented into a beverage that will bear the name of *wine*, however deficient it may be in those refined qualities which we, in England, are accustomed to associate with it. At its northern boundary the vine is a stunted shrub; in the warm south it spreads from tree to tree with a luxuriance of vegetation proportioned to the more genial influence of the climate. The vines of Tuscany or of Granada, and those of Coblentz, present a curious contrast, both in appearance and fruit. On the one, Nature bestows a prodigality of beneficent character; on the other, she seems to abandon her stunted offspring to man. The mountains of Ferdistan, in Persia, probably supplied the vines that were first ameliorated by culture. From Palestine or Asia Minor into the Greek islands the transition was natural, and from thence along the shores of the Mediterranean to the Straits of Hercules the progress was easy. It was cultivated in France before the time of the Cæsars—first, it is believed, at Marseilles—and was introduced into Germany at a later period, the earliest vineyards being on the Rhine, in a cleared portion of the Black Forest. In some parts of England, in propitious seasons, the grape will ripen very well; but the uncertainty of its climate prevents any attempt at cultivation with a view to the wine-press. Great Britain has a mean temperature as high as many parts of the world where the vine flourishes in perfection; but

although it is warmer than some of those countries in the winter, the temperature is lower in the months of September and October, at which period the fruit is arriving at maturity.

The vine must have been known in this country at a very early period, since we find it mentioned in the writings of Tacitus, who observes, "In this island there is no intense cold; and besides the olive and the vine, and other fruit-trees natural to warmer climates, the soil produces corn in considerable quantities." He adds further, that the natives were fed on a rude diet; at their meals each man had his mess to himself, and they drank freely of "barley corrupted into the likeness of wine." Ale and mead, or metheglin, were served at the feasts of our Saxon ancestors, and wine was only an occasional luxury. On the repeal by the Emperor Probus, in 282, of the edict of Domitian against all tillage of the grape, its culture in Britain was resumed, although more, it would seem, for shade and ornamentation than for the sake of the fruit. Camden and others date its first introduction here in the early part of the fourth century; and we learn, on the still more reliable testimony of the venerable Bede, that prior to the commencement of the eighth century the restoration of the plant had made considerable progress. There is, indeed, abundant evidence that vineyards did once exist in this country, and towards the middle of the twelfth century, as recorded by William of Malmesbury, they extended over large districts, producing abundantly, especially in the vale of Gloucester, regarding which he tells us, that "no county in England has more or richer vineyards, or which yield greater plenty of grapes, or of more agreeable flavour. The

wine has not a disagreeable sharpness to the taste, as it is little inferior to that of France in sweetness." In the counties of Worcester also, of Hereford, Somerset, Cambridge, and Essex, there are spots still called vineyards, many of them having been appurtenances of particular church establishments, whose ruins are yet in their vicinity. Vine-lands, moreover, are occasionally referred to in the laws of Alfred, and in other early documents; whilst in Domesday-book mention is made of them about eight-and-thirty times, most that were planted after the Conquest either appertaining to different monasteries, or were cultivated by the wealthy for amusement rather than profit. Neither, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, were the metropolitan suburbs in the closing years of Saxon rule altogether bare of these picturesque appliances, as it is stated that "without the city walls the old Roman vineyards still put forth their green leaves and crude clusters in the plains of East Smithfield, in the fields of St. Giles's, and on the site where now stands Hatton Garden,"—known for generations afterwards as a goodly appanage of the bishopric of Winchester. In some of the ecclesiastical records entries appear of tithes received on wine, whilst to all the greater abbeys vine-grounds were attached; and as these institutions were generally erected in fertile and well-sheltered valleys, the best spots for the plant might have been situate in their neighbourhood. But when it was found that the crop would not repay the grower more than one year in seven, open cultivation became neglected, and was gradually abandoned.

Wine countries, it is true, have been regarded with favour by political economists as constituting a perennial source of healthful occupation and support for a

numerous population; yet, even where aided by a favouring soil and clime, poverty and squalor too commonly aggravate their humble lot. That the inhabitants of many communes in France are exceedingly poor is obvious to every passing traveller; but although somewhat may, here as elsewhere, be fairly ascribed to errors of culture, injudicious selection of the stock-plant, inattention to the nature of the soil, situation, and aspect, to unskilful pruning or contracted means, yet it must be admitted that the state of positive indigence which prevails in many of these districts is owing mainly to the heavy and arbitrary public imposts that burthen the cultivator and his produce, the quality and value of which rarely constitute incidents of the taxation exacted. It is only in the case of such vineyards as yield the choicest growths, and where the proprietors possess sufficient capital to enable them to store their wines till they acquire that excellence which time and judicious treatment alone can give, that this branch of culture becomes remunerative or reliable.

The cultivation of the vine, for all practical purposes, is confined within 55° N. and the equator, but in south latitudes it ceases at 40°. It will bear any amount of heat, and is grown at various elevations, from 1,000 feet in Middle Germany to 5,000 feet in Italy and Sicily, and on the Himalayas as high as 10,000 feet above the level of the sea. Königsberg, in 54° 42' N., is the extremest point at which the grape can ripen. From the Rhine its culture continues throughout the middle and south of Europe to the fertile shores of the Grecian Archipelago; it is active in the north of China, Hindostan, Persia and the borders of the Euphrates, Syria, Lower Egypt, Abyssinia, and Barbary. In the new

world, both in North and South America, the vine is indigenous, and expands its foliage in wild luxuriance. In the ripening of the grape, the point of chief importance is the duration of summer heat. Thus, although the maximum of the season's temperature is as great at Moscow as in Paris, yet the vine will not properly ripen its fruit at the former place; and this arises from the fact, that notwithstanding the greatest heats of June and July are as high as that of Paris, the months of August and September are several degrees below.* Nor will the mean temperature serve as a rule to indicate where the plant thrives best; but it will grow in any ground which is not infected by stagnant waters, and flourishes most in that which is dry, light, and stony or sandy. Porous land, particularly when gravelly or chalky, yields the pleasantest wines, — fresh and light. The more calcareous the soil, the drier and more friable it is, the better for the vine; the water which falls at intervals permeates freely to the roots, the surplus is carried off by the pervious nature of the ground, and the product will be fine, dry, and generous. Granitic soils, or those mingled with decomposed particles of that rock, also yield good wines. Strong argillaceous loam is very prejudicial to the vine, as it not only restrains the free expansion of the roots, but often imparts an earthy taste to the produce. In central France it thrives in argillaceous slate: in the north, fat sand, with a mixture of calcareous loam, is preferred. Almost every free combination of earths and rocks will answer, but the injurious effects of too moist a site, or too rich an animal manure, are well known; as are the exhaustion and deterioration of soils, which, though

* Dr. E. Lankester, *Lectures On Food*.

formerly the homes of generous wines, are no longer capable of supplying them of equal quality.

In Italy and Sicily the choicest plants grow among the rubbish of volcanoes. Three-fourths of all vines are planted on hilly ground, and wines of the highest class are made from such as are reared among stone and loose pieces of rock, with little attention save occasionally raking the ground around them. Rich, highly-dressed land has never produced wine of preferable quality. In districts where the summer is sufficiently long and warm, and the temperature throughout the year never sinks below a minimum of 50 degrees of Fahrenheit, the vine matures nothing but ripe and well-flavoured fruit; and when the bearing is exuberant, the quantity as well as quality is dependent entirely upon the climate. The grape that furnishes the most saccharine matter makes the best wine; no other property will compensate for a deficiency in sugar, on which also depends the proportion of alcohol formed. As the pure juice of the grape is in all cases colourless, it is manifest that the colour of wine is wholly derived from the skin, and the lighter or darker shades it acquires rest on the greater or smaller quantity of purple husks allowed in the process of fermentation.

Of all fruits the grape, perhaps, is the most susceptible of alteration in its nature from the influence of nutrition and solar heat, and to this cause its varying qualities ought probably to be referred, rather than to any normal difference of species, which are very numerous. Fourteen hundred sorts from the provinces of France once adorned the gardens of the Luxembourg, of which above a thousand appeared worthy of a particular description; in 1844 a new catalogue was published,

which extended the number to two thousand. The botanical character and minute distinctions of those enumerated are not easy of perception, even on the spot where they grow: the unpractised eye cannot discriminate them. In all, however, the general properties of the plant are carefully described, so as to be readily recognised wherever the vine is cultivated, whether in regions that will properly mature the grape or not, which, as previously mentioned, varies with the influence of climate, the power of the sun, the atmospheric exposure, the character of the season, and the mode of tillage. Two hundred and fifty varieties are also particularized as cultivated in the kingdom of Andalusia alone. The quality of the grape is necessarily determined by the nature of the vine that produces it. Of some kinds the fruit is hard and rough; of others, it is sweet and mild: some varieties contain much saccharine matter; in others, the mucilaginous principle abounds. Nor can these distinctions be always ascertained by the taste; for two grapes may appear almost equally sweet, and yet on examination present very different constituents. Thus the ripe muscadine grape of Fuencaral was found to yield 30 per cent. of solid sugar, and the wine made from it is very sweet and generous; but the *chasselas* of Fontainebleau, though an exquisite grape to the palate, affords very little sugar. This species is cultivated exclusively for the table, the wine it furnishes being dry and indifferent, for its sweetness proceeds not so much from the proper sugar of the grape, as from the superabundance of the mucososaccharine matter. The red sorts usually ripen ten or twelve days sooner than the white, and in cultivation it is of importance to keep them separate. The age to

which the vine continues to bear well ranges ordinarily from sixty to seventy years, often more, and under favourable circumstances of site and soil it is long lived. In the Gironde, when properly attended to, it will last from 100 to 150 years. In the commune of Pauillac, in a gravelly soil, there are vines 200 years old; whilst at Pessac some are shown of a yet greater age, planted, as is there traditionally believed, in the fourteenth century, during the pontificate of Clement V. A vine in Burgundy is credibly recorded to have lived 400 years, and in Italy plants three centuries old continue to flourish productively. In 1585 North Allerton, in the west riding of Yorkshire, possessed a vine that covered 137 square yards, and was then a hundred years old. One at Valentines, in Essex, is known to have produced in one season 2,000 bunches of a pound each, filling a space of 147 square yards; and the celebrated vine now thriving at Hampton Court has grown in one year 2,200 clusters of grapes of the finest quality, averaging a pound weight each.

In selecting the plants most suitable for a vineyard, the choice is never confined to one species. This would be thought hazardous and unwise. Five or six kinds are not infrequent in the plantations most celebrated for their produce, and thus occasional deficiency in one sort is often counteracted by abundance in another. The modes pursued in planting, training, propping, and more especially of pruning the vine, which vary in different countries, further influence the character of the produce, and these are generally governed by custom and other local circumstances. The season for planting is best determined by the climate. In southern localities it takes place in the autumn, by which a year

is greatest in *training*: for the north, the more favourable time is towards the end of February, when the harder frosts and heavy rains are over. In pruning, the vines are thinned three times before they bear fruit, when the operation is again repeated. The importance of careful training is everywhere recognised, and ingenuity has been exhausted in judicious endeavours to meet the varying peculiarities of differing sites. In ancient times the Romans trained their stocks along palisades placed at convenient distances, or from tree to tree; and this, which is called the high method of training, is still partially followed in Italy and some communes of the south of France. When two or more roots are planted near a tree, the shoots soon run up the trunk; sustained by and interlacing with the several branches, they droop in graceful festoons, and impart around an air of cultivated opulence. Most persons imagine that this is the mode adopted in all vineyards; hence they are disappointed on first visiting the Continent, more particularly the cooler districts of the north. The low system of training came originally from Greece, and has been subject to various modifications. It was adopted at Marseilles when it was a Phœcean colony, and is now the ordinary usage in France, Germany, Switzerland, and Hungary. The vines of Greece, Cyprus, and Candia are seldom above three feet high, but growing very thick in the stem, and trimmed like pollards, they are left to themselves. In some places the branches are trained so low as to remain without any support, or they rest on little rods in circles near the ground: in Baden they are raised on pyramids of poles in a complex manner, which is found to expose a larger portion of the fruit to the solar action. In the numerous com-

munes of Médoc the main stem is not permitted to exceed a foot in height, when it is secured by stakes; to these are joined horizontal laths, on which the young shoots are laid when carefully trimmed. The grapes are thus prevented from touching the ground, whilst they benefit from both the direct and reflected heat of the sun's rays, as well as from the warm exhalations that ascend from the earth; and this is considered to be the most perfect mode of treatment known. At Weissenbourg, in Alsace, the vines are trained in long arcades and summer bowers, or on palisades near walls of different elevations. The former style of culture is pleasing and suitable enough for the garden, but is not equally appropriate for the vineyard, because the plant is deprived of the full influence of the sun, and being often trained to a considerable height, is continually exposed to the action of the cold winds. The fruit of high vines never ripens so fully and equally as such as are trained low; and in general it may be taken as a sound maxim that the nearer the stems are kept to the ground, provided there is no contact, the better will be the fruit produced. Where it is permitted to grow without check, it will ascend to the top of the highest trees, and distribute its shoots in all directions; but the grapes so ripened will be proportionably inferior, and the wine made from them prove hard and austere, for the greater the exuberance of fruit, the worse will be its quality, yielding a weak and defective juice that soon turns acid, as the must of wild grapes will always do.

During a long succession of ages, the art of wine-making was conducted on undefined and empirical rules, and the false notions of elementary philosophy so prevalent in primitive times rendered abortive all

attempts to fix the theory on a sound and satisfactory basis. To Lavoisier must be accorded the merit of having first pointed out the true principles on which it is to be explained. The labours of his successors have confirmed his speculations, and the doctrine of fermentation has attained all the precision requisite for practical use. On so subtle and difficult a subject, indeed, an approximation to the truth is the most that can be expected: the primary cause of fermentation, as with other chemical agencies, will probably always remain a mystery; and we must rest satisfied with a knowledge of the principal conditions on which it depends, and by which the qualities of its products are mainly influenced.

The temperature most favourable to vinous fermentation appears to be 65° of Fahrenheit: below that point it is languid; above, it becomes violent; and at a very high or very low temperature its action ceases altogether. The principal results of the fermentative process are the production of alcohol by the decomposition of the sugar, and the separation of the mucilage and extractive matter of the must in the form of lees. Whether any other important chemical changes take place has not been perfectly ascertained, but as the wine has often a flavour totally different from the grape of which it was made, it may be assumed that some of the other constituents enter into new combinations, governed by the peculiarity of the fruit and the particular mode of conducting the fermentation. Wines made in vessels so closed as merely to allow a slow and gradual escape of the carbonic acid gas, are commonly of a more generous quality and of a higher flavour than such as are fermented in open vats, and in general the process is more

prompt and lively in proportion to the bulk of the leavening mass. In a cask it proceeds more slowly than in a vat, but the alcohol and aroma of the wine are better preserved. Large vessels are to be preferred when the weather is cold, or the grapes either too green or too ripe.

The juice of the grape, as ascertained by chemical analysis, consists of the following principal ingredients; viz. a considerable portion of water and sugar, a quantity of mucilage, some tannin, acidulated tartrate of potash, tartrate of lime, phosphate of magnesia, muriate of soda, and sulphate of potash. Besides these, certain kinds contain gallic acid, and in all wines a portion of malic acid, and some traces of citric acid may be perceived; but in the best wines the quantity is inconsiderable, and is generally in an inverse ratio to that of the saccharine principle, or alcohol. Some growths are distinguished by a high perfume and grateful aromatic flavour; others by their rough and astringent taste. In dry wines the saccharine matter has been entirely decomposed; in sweet wines a portion of the sugar remains in its original state. Quality must necessarily vary according to the nature of the seasons. In a cold year the fruit will not attain its proper maturity, and be deficient in flavour and saccharine matter; hence the wine it yields will be comparatively weak and harsh, and liable to ropiness and acerbity. When the season is rainy the produce will be increased, but it will be poor and insipid, and will generally contain an excess of malic acid, which imparts a peculiar flavour, always most perceptible in wines that generate but little alcohol. High winds and fogs are always injurious to the vine. In 1816 the grapes in many of the vine

districts of central Europe were left ungathered from the badness of the weather, the fruit, to the month even of November, remaining rotten and neglected.

All wines possess a peculiar aroma or perfume, which constitutes one of their most valued properties. The smell and taste which distinguish them from all other fermented liquids depend upon an ether of a volatile and combustible acid of an oily nature, now known as *cenanthic ether*. The wines of warm climates have little or no odour : those grown in France retain it in a marked degree, whilst in the produce of the Rhine the perfume is intense ; it differs in many cases from the flavour of the liquor, and is commonly more powerful in the weaker wines than in the strong. The chief product of the vinous fermentation is the alcohol, which may be separated from the wine in a pure state by the process of distillation. The strong growths of the south give the largest amount, especially those of Andalusia and Languedoc, which yield nearly one-third of proof spirit. When young wine has attained a sufficient degree of maturity, it is freed from the lees by being racked into a clean cask. Though the liquor may possess no longer a saccharine taste, yet a portion of the sugar will generally be found to remain undecomposed ; this will be acted upon by the extractive matter which still exists in solution, and a disengagement of carbonic acid gas, with a fresh deposit of sediment, will ensue. A portion of the colouring matter and tartar is precipitated, the liquor loses its harshness, and the odour and flavour peculiar to it become more apparent. By degrees these movements will be less perceptible ; but in the stronger wines they will continue during many years, in the course of which they become

much ameliorated. These changes may be accelerated by various artificial methods, especially by the agitation of the lees, which always retain a portion of fermentative matter, and by the assistance of heat. Hence we may comprehend the reason why certain strong and austere kinds are so much improved and mellowed by being exported on the lees to a warm climate, while the lighter and more delicate sorts, making little deposit, are mostly injured by being made to undergo a similar process, or even by the motion occasioned by their transfer to any considerable distance. In some points of view the acetous fermentation may be considered a continuance of the vinous. Both are dependent on the presence of the same leaven, and on a certain degree of heat, and both are accompanied by agitation of the fermenting mass, and by a considerable evolution of caloric. In the one case the component parts of the sugar enter into new combinations, and form carbonic acid and alcohol; while, in the other, they resume part of the oxygen which had been previously given out, and are changed into vinegar. When a vintager holds land producing fruit of different qualities, he will sometimes mingle his grapes to obtain a wine of a more desirable character, careful, however, to reject such as are inferior or unripe. A cloudy wine of little merit would be the result of a good mingled with a commoner growth. If it be his object to obtain a dry and full-flavoured wine, he will gather the grapes as soon as they have acquired their proper maturity, and before they begin to shrink and wither on the stalk; or if he wish to have a very brisk sort, he may collect them before they are perfectly ripe; but if a sweet wine is desired, he will postpone the vintage to the latest moment. Again, if

in its fabrication there should be a deficiency of the saccharine element, a generous wine will not be produced; but if the sugar and other essential qualities present in the grapes when under the press should be tolerably proportioned, and the fruit free from decay and extraneous matter, a sound, wholesome beverage may be expected. When the grape is rich in saccharine mucilage, and the fruit itself perfect and well matured, a wine of the highest character and quality will be the result, if proper judgment and attention be exercised in the process of fermentation. With the absence or deficiency of these qualifications, and a predominance of any property adverse to vinous purity in the grapes when under the action of the press, come secondary and inferior samples proportionate to the uncongenial elements contained in the fruit. As sugar, tartarous and malic acid, vegetable pulp, and aqueous deposit form the constituents composing the grape, according as these ingredients vary relatively with each other, so will be the differences in quality, flavour, and odour when converted into wine.

The aggregate quantity of wine annually raised on the European continent is very considerable. The production of France alone exceeds nine hundred million gallons; the empire of Austria (including Hungary) contributes five hundred millions, to which the rest of Germany adds above forty-five millions more. The statistics of other countries are less certain, but the produce of Spain and Portugal has been estimated at seven hundred million gallons, and that of Italy and Greece at one hundred and twenty millions in addition,—a bounteous supplement to the ever recurring natural productions that so largely minister to the gratification and sustentation of man.

The powder or bloom seen on the grape in its riper state, is regarded as a token that its cultivation has been carefully superintended. When in flower the vine exhales an agreeable odour, and there is no part of the plant which is not applicable to some useful purpose. In Switzerland the leaves are applied to medicinal or surgical uses. In cuts and green wounds they are esteemed a sovereign remedy : decoctions of the juice of the leaves are used in poultices with great advantage. When boiled they yield an agreeable tea, but more astringent than that of China : it is much liked, and thought very bracing to the nervous system. The prunings, crushed and pressed, give excellent vinegar. The leaves and tendrils bruised, and the juice fermented, afford a pleasant light drink of a vinous character. The leaves form also excellent food for cattle when fodder is scarce, but they are of too much value in the vineyard to be often spared for that purpose. In such cases they should not be taken till they begin to fall off. They are then collected, put in a dry loft, and sometimes salted, pressed, and left to ferment. In some places they are alternated with layers of straw, and then form still more excellent fodder. After the vintage, animals are often turned into the grounds to browse on the leaves. Vine branches furnish potash and salts when burned ; basket-work is made from them ; and the bark is used for bands to tie the vines to the props.

The must of the south is employed in making a rich confection with citron and aromatic sweets. The murk is greedily eaten by herbivorous animals : it is given dry, or mingled with other fodder. Fowls are remarkably fond of it. In some places it is given fresh from the vat to cows and mules, but in that state it intoxicates

and injures them. After the vintage, it is customary with some growers to supply the dovecots freely with murk, the pips being eagerly devoured by the birds: where fuel is scarce, it is often dried and burned, being laid up for winter use, like tan in some parts of England. When in a state of fermentation, it is useful as a bath for rheumatism, by exciting perspiration. It is said to be a specific for the rickets, used in this way. Fractured limbs, placed for a longer or shorter time, as may be necessary, in a vessel of murk, whilst yet hot from fermentation, are said to consolidate more rapidly than by any other auxiliar. Even the pips or seeds of the grape are convertible to useful purposes besides that of feeding pigeons. Separated from the murk by washing, and carefully dried, they are ground in an oil-mill: the produce is very superior to that obtained from nuts, either for eating or burning in lamps; no bad odour accompanies the use, and it burns as bright as olive oil, without any smoke. The murk, macerated in water and distilled, yields brandy of a secondary quality.

It will hardly be matter of surprise that a plant endowed with so many beneficial properties should be invested with superstitious and mythical associations. Not only do the leaves decorate the hair of the village girls in some of the southern wine districts, but the mode of plucking them under certain spells is thought to discover to the credulous lasses the truth or falsehood of their lovers. In Germany, on the other hand, the vine is venerated for its benign and curative virtues, the grape being there esteemed as an efficacious remedy for pneumonia, bronchitis, and other affections of the respiratory organs. Diseases of the heart and liver, or other internal complaints, gout, rheumatism, and even

Bright's disease and tubercular consumption in its earlier stages, are also claimed by the German doctors as coming within the scope of its sanitary influence. For a skilful administration of the 'grape cure,' as it is called, suitable hospitaliers for the reception of patients are provided in various localities. Meran, in the Tyrol, and Vevay and Montreux, on the lake of Geneva, have a high reputation; but in Germany, Dürkheim, near Mannheim on the Rhine, is the place which enjoys most fame, persons coming from all parts of the country at vintage time to try its healing powers, and always with more or less success. The quantity of fruit eaten by each patient during the course of treatment, usually occupying from three to six weeks, graduates from 4 to 8, or even 9 lbs. daily. Whether the grape as a remedy is really as efficacious as its advocates suppose or not, a free use of such fruit cannot be far wrong, and might prove beneficial in many cases of visceral obstruction or derangement; for of all the vegetable juices, none seems so well adapted to the constitutional exigencies of man. In all times of serious sickness, and more especially in severe cases of fever, when the system is put to its severest strain, and its strength reduced to the lowest ebb, Nature, with unerring instinct, indicates its real wants, and grapes are often the only refreshment welcome to parched and thirsty lips. The 'grape cure' may be carried to excess by its own practitioners, but there is considerable truth in it, much good and little harm can be done by it, and it is regarded with favour by many of the most sensible physicians in Germany.

The influence of the seasons upon the vine, as upon most other productions of the soil, is a primary cause of plenty or scarcity. A cold wet season is unproductive,

and the grape insipid; winds too dry are detrimental, and much rain when the plant is in flower causes a subsequent dropping off of the berry; spring frosts and fogs are injurious, but autumnal frosts are far more prejudicial; they disorganize the ripening fruit, and sometimes even stint the measure of the succeeding crop. The most favoured spots, moreover, are not invariably exempt from the vicissitudes that occasionally affect both the plant and the vintage. Despite the care and assiduity of the cultivator, canker, plethora, paralysis, and several other diseases at times assail the vine, whilst the seasonal and other accidents tending to a deterioration of the fruit are numerous. But besides these untoward visitations, the vine is liable to frequent injury from the casual inroads of other enemies. Not only do the plants suffer at times from the meteorological influences of frost and fog, of rain and hail, of blighting winds and excessive rain, but quadrupeds and insects equally prey on the juices either of the fruit or the stalk. The stealthy fox invades the vineyard to feast on the grapes; the wild boar and the badger equally covet its fruit; and worst of all, the trusted sentinel—the domestic dog, sometimes turns traitor, and his depredations have been known to ruin the crop of a whole season. Birds, such as the linnet, thrush, starling, blackbird, and a few others, particularly birds of passage coming in whole flocks, often make heavy ravages. On the other hand, many of them effect much good by destroying myriads of insects, which nestle and prey on the fibre and sap. The snail and the slug work their mischief during the silence of night: as the grapes ripen, the wasp and the fly pilfer their sweetness by day. The insect family, too, which infest the trunk are rapacious and in-

numerable. Some dwell on the stem, and others in the roots and leaves. The common may-bug and the vine may-bug are two of these: the former, by assailing the roots, is the most injurious of the two. The vine, moreover, is not exempt from another and still more subtle danger, as exemplified in the desolating effects of the recent epidemic, which, from its novelty and intensity, deserves especial mention.

The fifth decade of the present century will long be memorable, from the irruption of a destructive malady sufficiently remarkable for its extent, duration, and severity to form an epoch in the annals of the vine. It is not a little singular, that the origin of a pestilence which has wrought so much mischief and loss throughout the wine-growing countries of Europe, should be attributed to a locality where the vine may be said to be almost of artificial growth. The simple fact of the *oïdium* having been first noticed on vines cultivated in hot-houses by Mr. Tucker of Margate, in 1845, has led to the supposition that it was originally engendered by the high and humid temperature of the English conservatory; but the symptoms appear to have been detected on the banks of the Rhône by M. Dupuis as early as 1834; and there is reason, moreover, for thinking that the blight, although recurring with unprecedented virulence, is not a new form of disease, for there are documents extant in the archives of Spain, a century old, which describe a distemper that would seem, both in character and effect, to be identical with it. Be that as it may, the derangement in the present instance was first marked by the exudation of white efflorescences, which speedily covered the stem; the grapes were next attacked and hindered from swelling, which occasioned

the skin to burst, and they quickly became rotten, and dropped off. Great fears were at first entertained lest this mysterious visitation should exercise a prejudicial influence on the public health; and many deaths from severe cholic, diarrhœa, and similar complaints having been ascribed to it, the careful attention of botanical professors of chemistry was directed to an investigation of the seat and action of the disease, who ascertained that the white, dusty excrescence was a microscopic fungus belonging to the parasitical plants of the class *oidio*, and being of a new species was named *oidium Tuckeri*. This fungus attacks the hinder parts of the vine, but rarely injures the stem. The leaves and tendrils also become more or less affected, the green colour becoming paler, and emitting an offensive odour. It was conjectured that the fungus was occasioned by the puncture of an insect, and its presence was actually detected in the seed of the grape, and on the reverse side of the leaf. The grub established itself on the leaves, and formed a sort of film resembling cobwebs, blistering the upper part of the leaf. Its birth is, however, thought to be subsequent to the invasion of the *oidium*, and may be consequent on the altered state of the vegetable portions of the vine. From these well-ascertained facts, it may be safely considered that this novel malady is a true botanical epidemic, like the cholera and other atmospheric visitations, the latent causes of which remain yet unsolved. It did not, however, prove in any way inimical to human life, and animals and birds, fed on the diseased grapes, seeds, and leaves, throve well, and continued quite healthy. Wine, too, though made from fruit in the worst state of distemper, produced no bad effects; but

the vintages generally did not keep well, the stronger sorts, even, evincing an early disposition to acescency.

The *oidium* plague first manifested itself in 1850, and taking its rise in the French department of the Seine, it rapidly extended its baneful course over the whole European continent, retaining for five successive years, with more or less severity, its withering and ruinous sway. Numerous remedies were resorted to, but a dressing of sulphur was for a long time considered the only efficacious application: it acted chemically on the fungus, suppressing and decomposing it in a few hours. Subsequent experiments, however, show that powdered charcoal possesses similar remedial virtues, attributable, probably, to its absolvent and antiseptic properties. The loss occasioned by the ravages of this destructive malady was intensely felt by incalculable numbers: in many districts the failure was complete; vines were uprooted, and fears were prevalent as to its permanent influence on the welfare of the grape. There are fair grounds, however, for believing that a recurrence of the distemper would not be attended with the same extent of evil; and the one benefit to be gathered from the calamity seems to be, a certainty that, with the removal of defective and exhausted vines, the young plantations promise well for a vigorous and lasting renovation.



SECTION II.

The Vintages of the Antients.

MUCH care and attention appear to have been bestowed on the management of their vineyards by the antients, who were familiar with the most approved rules for both the culture and treatment of the vine. They were aware how much the health of the plant and the qualities of the grape are liable to be affected by different soils and aspects, and were at great pains in choosing a proper situation for their plantations. They condemned lands composed of stiff unctuous clay, or subject to much humidity, selecting such as were not too thin, but light and sufficiently porous to admit the requisite moisture, and allow a free expansion of the roots. The advantages of soils formed of a chalky or marly loam, or composed of rocky *débris*, were not overlooked; but the preference appears to have been given to the black crumbling soil of the Campania, which consisted of decomposed tufa. Of different exposures, a southern aspect was deemed the most favourable; and the superior flavour of wines grown on the sides of hills, compared with those raised on the plain, was fully recognised.

The varieties of the vine known in early ages were numerous, above fifty different sorts being described with sufficient minuteness to enable us to estimate the relation in which they stand to our modern kinds. Among them a strong preference existed in favour of the Aminean, which is described by Pliny as surpassing

all others in the richness and flavour of the grape. Next in excellence was ranked the Normentan, which, although still more prolific than the Aminean, seems to have secreted a greater proportion of saccharine mucilage, and so far suiting it better for the table. The Eugenian, Helveolan, Spionian, and several others, were also esteemed for their abundance, and the choice qualities of the wine which they yielded. That no pains or expense was spared by the antients in procuring the best species of vine is evidenced in the accounts which they give of the effects of their transplantation, as well as in the system of management adopted in those days for preparing and dressing the ground; whilst the methods pursued in pruning, grafting, and tending the plants, are marked by equal skill and discernment. That their views were occasionally erroneous may be readily imagined; still, considering the infancy of physical science at that period, they evidently possessed a very ample knowledge of the subject. Indeed, it may well be doubted whether any branch of agriculture has remained so stationary, or been so little influenced by the improvements of more recent times; for, throughout a great part of Europe, the ancient usages with respect to the treatment of the vine are still observed to linger, and it is only in those countries where commerce has led to the extension of useful inventions, and furnished a stimulus to increased exertion, that better methods have prevailed.

Superstition and mysticism are the common offshoots of ignorance and prejudice, and illustrious as the Athenians were from their refined taste, their skill in the fine arts, their sophists and philosophers, it will not be regarded as very wonderful if occult doctrines in a

pagan age were not suffered to languish for want of earnest advocates. Among the maxims sanctioned by Pliny, he directs that grapes for the richer wines should be dried,—if by night, at the advent of the new moon, or if by day, at full moon. It may, at first sight, appear somewhat singular that any important meteorological action should be attributed to lunar agency; but, according to popular tradition and opinions in early times, our satellite is responsible for a variety of influences on the organized world. The circulation of the sap in vegetables, the qualities of grain, the goodness of the vintage, are severally laid to its account; timber was to be planted and felled, the harvest secured, the juice of the grape expressed, and its subsequent treatment guided and regulated at precise periods, and under circumstances having express relation to the phases of the moon. Nor is its rule, according to ancient belief, restricted to mere physical or organic effects; it extends its sway over human maladies; the very marrow of our bones and the weight of our bodies sustain diminution or increase under its influence, and it notably governs mental aberrations. If such notions were confined to a single creed or particular parts of the world, or prevailed only at particular epochs, they would be entitled to small consideration; but it is a curious fact, that many of these phantom ideas exist among nations and people so distant and unconnected, that it is impossible not to imagine similar errors to have had a common origin. Astronomers have demonstrated that the moon's gravitation is productive of various phenomena on the surface of our globe, conspicuous among which are the ocean tides; but popular impulse goes yet further, and claims for our satellite numerous other influences which

do not seem to appertain to mere physical affinity or attraction. In France, to this day, pruning commences about the end of February, always at the waning of the moon, and a maxim prevails with cultivators generally, that wine made between the periods of two moons is never of a good quality, and cannot be bright. Toaldo, the celebrated Italian meteorologist, whose mind appears to have been predisposed for the reception of lunar prejudices, attempts to justify this axiom. "The vinous fermentation," he maintains, "can only be carried on in two moons when it begins immediately before the new moon; and, consequently, this being a time when the enlightened side of the moon is turned for the most part from the earth, our atmosphere is deprived of the heat of the lunar rays, and therefore the temperature of the earth is lowered, and the fermentation is less active." To this it may be answered, that the moon's rays do not affect the temperature of the air to the extent of 1,000th part of a thermometrical degree,* and that the difference of temperature between any two places where the vintage is going on may be many degrees greater at any given moment of time, and yet no one ever supposes that this can determine the quality of the wine. According to the doctrines of the ancients, the fate of the vintage was still more powerfully affected by the influence of a particular star, and moreover one scarcely so bright as to be classed among those of the first magnitude. This stellar enemy of the grape is the one called *Procyon*, in the constellation of the Little Dog. Pliny records the opinion prevalent in his time, that Procyon decided the fate of the vintage, and that its malign influence

* Dr. Lardner.

dried up the grape. Even with modern Italian vintners it is a received dictum, that wine ought never to be transferred from one cask to another in the months of January or March, unless in the decline of the moon, under the penalty of having it spoiled. Toaldo has not favoured us with any physical reason for this axiom, but it is remarkable that Pliny, on the authority of Hyginus, recommends precisely the opposite course. It may be safely inferred, then, from such rules of contrary, that the moon exercises no influence whatever in this case, malifluent or otherwise.

Crude and fanciful as such notions may appear in the eyes of an English reader, there is little room for doubt that they formerly held extensive sway over more than one age or people. Nor even at the present day are there wanting either adherents or supporters of the doctrine, if we accept the narrative of a recent accomplished Eastern traveller, who tells us that "the natives of India believe, and my own experience convinces me of the fact, that the moon exercises a strong influence on trees; and as they think that if they cut down a tree when the moon is on the increase the sap will be up, they wait for the decrease of the planet; because it is well known to all practical engineers in India that wood, if cut while the moon is on the increase, will be full of worm, whilst that cut in its decrease will be quite free. In Sindh I was assured that the like opinion prevails."*

The oldest reliable account concerning ancient wine is given by Mago, a Carthaginian, who, about 550 years prior to the Christian era, wrote twenty-eight

* *Narrative of a Residence at the Court of Ali Moorad, ex-Ameer of Sindh*; by Captain Edward A. Langley, Madras Cavalry.

books on husbandry, and the close resemblance between the directions laid down by him and the process practised in after ages is so remarkable, as to justify a brief recapitulation here: "Let the bunches of grapes, quite ripe, and scorched or shrivelled in the sun, when the bad and faulty ones are picked out, be spread on a frame resting on stakes or forks, and covered with a layer of reeds. Place them in the sun, but protect them from the dew at night. When they are quite dry, pluck the grapes from the stalks, throw them into a cask, and make the first must. If they have well drained, put them, at the end of six days, into a vessel, and press them for the first wine. A second time let them be pounded [trodden] and pressed, adding cold must to the pressing. This second wine is to be placed in a pitched vessel, lest it become sour. After it has remained twenty or thirty days and fermented, rack it into another vessel, and stopping it close immediately, cover it with a skin." That these rules prevailed between five and six hundred years afterwards, we have the testimony of Columella, who lived fifty years after our Saviour, for he remarks, in his copious treatise on Roman agriculture, that "Mago gives similar directions for making the best sort of wine as I myself have done."

The management necessary for giving to their wines a high degree of perfection appears to have been well understood among the antients, who were singularly curious in the means they employed for bringing them to a proper degree of maturity, and for their preservation over a lengthened term. To ripen and concentrate their more essential properties, heat, even to inspissation, was applied by the domestic *fumarium*, or smoke-vent; and to soften and enrich the flavour and aroma, myrrh,

spikenard, and various aromatics were infused; whilst for the purposes of clarifying, correcting nascent roughness or acidity, and imparting factitious strength and pungency to the liquor, cypress, pine-leaves, myrtle-berries, bitter almonds, pitch, tar, rosin, and other incongruous substances were freely resorted to. On racking their wines, too, they were careful to direct it to be done only when the wind was northerly; and held, according to Plutarch, that their quality and condition were most affected by the west wind. The application of the fumatory to the mellowing process was borrowed from the Asiatics, who exposed their wines to the heat of the sun on the tops of their houses, and afterwards deposited them in apartments warmed from below, to render them earlier fit for use. As the flues by which the ancient dwellings were heated were probably made to open into the fumarium, it is obvious that a steady temperature could be easily supplied, and that the vessels would be fully exposed to the action of the smoke. Although the value of this procedure may to our modern notions appear very questionable, yet it would not seem to differ very widely from that of a recent method of mellowing Madeira and other strong wines by placing them in a hot-house, or in the vicinity of a kitchen fire or baker's oven, which is found to assist the developement of their flavour, and to bring them sooner to maturity. As the earthen vases which held the ancient wines were well defended by a thick coating of pitch or plaster, it is not likely that the smoke could penetrate so as to vitiate the genuine taste and odour of the liquor; but the warmth so maintained would have the required effect of softening the harshness of the stronger kinds, and probably of dissipating

excess in the potent aroma of the condiments with which they were impregnated.

One consequence, however, of the long exposure of the amphoræ to the influence of the flue must have been, that a portion of the contents would exhale, and that the residue would acquire a greater or less degree of consistence; for however well the vases might have been coated and lined, or however carefully closed, yet, from the nature of the materials employed in their composition, from the action of the volatile fluid from within, and the effect of the smoke and heat from without, it was impossible that some degree of exudation should not ensue, gradually reducing it to the state of a syrup or extract. Hence it comes that so many of the ancient wines were described as thick and fat, and that they were not deemed ripe for use until they had acquired an oily smoothness from age: hence, too, the practice of employing strainers to clarify them, and free them from their dregs. In fact they often became so viscid, that they could no longer be poured from the vessels, and it was necessary to dissolve them in hot water before they could be drunk.

Accident is said to have led to the discovery of another method in their treatment. A slave, who had stolen part of the contents of a cask, to escape detection resorted to the expedient of supplying the deficiency with sea-water, which, on subsequent investigation, was thought to have improved the flavour of the liquor; and thenceforward the practice of adding salt water to certain wines became common among the Greeks. For this purpose, the water was directed to be taken up as far as possible from the shore, and in a calm and clear day, to ensure its being of the requisite strength and

purity, and then boiled down to about a third part before it was added to the wine.

At first sight it seems difficult to account for the expedients then resorted to, or how a predilection could exist for wines perfected by the addition of sea-water, or impregnated with the odour of pitch, rosin, and other resinous gums; nor can it be well imagined that their strong liquors could be rendered very exquisite by being exposed to smoky garrets until reduced to a syrup, and rendered so muddy and thick as to require straining through a fine cloth in order to free them from impurities, or to be scraped from the sides of the vessels and dissolved in hot water, before they were fit to be swallowed. But when we consider the effects of habit, which soon reconciles the palate to the most disagreeable substances, and the influence of fashion and luxury, which leads us to prefer every thing that is costly or exclusive to articles of more intrinsic worth and moderate price, we may readily conceive that both Greeks and Romans might have excused their fondness for pitched and pickled wines on the same plea by which we justify our preference to beer, coffee, or tobacco. It was long ago observed by Plutarch, that certain dishes and liquors which at first appeared intolerable, came in time to be reckoned the most agreeable; and surely the charge of indulging a perverted taste in wine would proceed with an ill grace from a people, among whom a notorious partiality exists in favour of harsh and potent liquors, which long use has rendered palatable to their respective admirers. A more attentive examination of the facts, however, will probably satisfy us that these practices of the antients were by no means so injurious to the qualities of their liquors as, on a hasty view, we

might be inclined to suspect. Many of the ingredients that entered into the composition of their condiments, being of an insoluble nature, were designed to operate chiefly by way of clarifying or filtrating the liquors to which they were added. Others, again, would doubtless impart their own peculiar flavour, but then great caution was exercised lest it should become too predominant, and even this was often wholly or partially neutralized by age. When new, the antients condemned such rosined and tainted beverage as much as ourselves, and it was only when their acrid qualities had become subdued that they were held in any degree of estimation.

The Roman vine-grounds were very fertile, producing wine in great abundance: it was vended at very moderate prices, the cost of a gallon not exceeding fourpence of our money. The lighter red descriptions were used for ordinary purposes, and would seldom keep longer than from one vintage to another. The stronger dark-coloured varieties, when long kept, underwent a kind of decomposition, and by the precipitation of part of the extractive matter, and the mellowness resulting from age, the genuine flavour of the growth was fully developed, and all early asperity removed. From the mode, however, pursued by the antients, a greater or less inspissation of their wines took place; and this was most observable in the more generous kinds, the taste becoming disagreeably bitter, and the true flavour of the liquor obscured. Wine of a middle age was therefore to be preferred, as being the most wholesome and grateful; but in those days, even as in ours, it was the fashion to place the highest value on whatever was rarest, and an extravagant sum was often given for wines which were literally hardly drinkable. Such

seems to have been the famous vintage in the consulship of L. Opimius Nepos, when, from the great heat of the summer, all the productions of the earth attained an uncommon degree of perfection. Pliny, who lived a couple of centuries afterwards, asserts that some of it still existed in his time, but reduced to the consistence of honey, and applicable only in small quantities for flavouring other wines, or mixing with water. This custom might have given rise to the use of mulled wine, so highly in favour with the Roman people.

As the Romans lived much in public, and but few had the necessary conveniences for keeping a stock of wine in their dwellings, persons of moderate means were supplied, as they wanted it, with a cask or an amphora from one of the public stores, where wines of all ages and qualities were to be had. Of its great abundance in early times the liberal allowance which Cato, notwithstanding his extreme frugality, prescribes for his farm-servants, may afford some notion. "After the vintage is finished," he says, "let the family drink the *lora*, or small wine made of the husks, during the first three months. In the fourth month, the allowance of wine may be one *hemina* (three-quarters of a pint) daily, or, altogether, three gallons for each individual: in the fifth to the eighth month, a pint and a half daily, or in each month five gallons: in the ninth to the twelfth month three *heminae* daily, that is at the rate of one amphora in the month. During the Saturnalia and Compitalia the quantity may be increased to a gallon a day. On the whole we may reckon the annual consumption of each man at eight amphoræ; but to the slaves in fetters we must give rather more, in order that they may perform their work. For them we may con-

sider the allowance of ten amphoræ (68 gallons) in the year as by no means immoderate."

This, however, is only referring to the weak common wines, which as a beverage were probably little superior to our table-beer. But the progress of luxury and the extension of conquest and commerce led to a similar profusion of the more costly kinds. Caius Lentius used to say, that Chian wine was first introduced into his house as a cordial prescribed to him by his physician: Hortensius left more than 10,000 casks of it to his heir. And it is related of Lucius L. Lucullus, that, when a boy, he never saw Greek wine presented to the guests oftener than once at any of the great entertainments given by his father; but when he returned from his Asiatic expedition, he himself distributed upwards of 100,000 gallons. Lucullus was raised to the consulship seventy-three years before the Christian era, and was remarkable for his victories and his riches, his justice and humanity. His conquests in Africa and Asia brought him immense spoil, and on his return from the Levant, with prodigious wealth, he gave himself up to excessive luxury. The expenses of his meals were immoderate, and his table was served with a profusion unknown till that time. His apartments were called after the names of different gods, and this distinction served as a sufficient direction to the steward what cost to incur on the entertainment to be there given, for each of his dining-rooms had its particular bill of fare, as well as an appropriate service of plate and other decorative furniture. Pompey and Cicero, on one occasion, thinking to surprise him by an unexpected visit, were astonished at the magnificence and variety lavished on a supper suddenly provided, and on the mere bidding

of Lucullus that he would sup that evening in the hall of Apollo, the name he had given to one of his most magnificent saloons. The stated cost of a banquet there was 50,000 drachmas,* and the whole sum was expended on this occasion. His mansion was further enriched with a valuable library, which was opened for the service of the learned and the curious, and he devoted much of his own time to studious pursuits and literary conversation. Lucullus has the credit of being the first who planted cherry-trees in Europe, having brought the grafts from the kingdom of Pontus.

Amphictyon is said to have issued a law, directing that pure wine should be merely tasted at the entertainments of the Athenians; but that the guests should be allowed to drink freely of wine mixed with water. To take it otherwise was held disreputable. However much this excellent rule may have been occasionally disregarded, it is certain that the prevailing custom among the Greeks was to drink their wines in a diluted state. The varieties in use bore a high reputation, the virtues and potency of which secured the praise and delight of Homer himself. It was in their luscious sweet wines that that people surpassed all other nations, and to this class the commendations of their later poets must be chiefly ascribed. They were, for the most part, the products of the Ionian and Ægean seas, where the cultivation of the vine was assiduously practised, and where a benignant climate and the choicest soils gave to its fruit an unusual degree of excellence. Lesbos, Chios, and Thasos, in particular, seem each to have contended for the superiority of its respective growths; but several other islands in the Archipelago, as Cyprus, Crete

* The Roman drachma was equivalent to about $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ of our money.

and Rhodes, yielded wines much esteemed for their luscious fragrance, and it was from them that the greater part of Europe was supplied, till a comparatively recent period, with the richest sweet kinds. The grapes were culled in their ripest state, and being generally of the muscat species, would impart a grateful perfume to the liquor,—a quality on which the Greeks placed a high value, as may be seen from the frequent allusions to it by their poets. The exquisite aroma of the Sappian, which was probably Chian wine matured by great age, held the first rank in the estimation both of the bard and the historian. The Lesbian would seem to have been less fragrant, but to have possessed a delicious flavour, for it is said to have deserved the name of ambrosia rather than of wine, and to have been like nectar when old. The Thasian was a generous sweet kind, ripening slowly, and acquiring with age a delicate odour of the apple. The Chian, again, is described by some as a thick luscious wine; and that which grew on the craggy heights of Ariusium, extending three hundred stadia along the coast, was extolled as the best of all of Greek origin.

“Vina novum fundam calathis Ariusia nectar.”—VIRGIL, *Ecl.*

But besides these indigenous growths, the Greeks were familiar with the produce of the African and Asiatic vines, of which several enjoyed a distinguished reputation, and may be considered as the parent stocks from which their first vineyards were derived. Of these, the earliest of which we have any distinct account is the Mareonean, probably the production of the territory of that name on the coast of Thrace. It was a black sweet wine, and from the evident delight with which the father of poetry enlarges on its virtues, we may venture

to consider it to have been similar in character to the delicious Vin Santo or Lacryma Christi of modern days, and of the choicest quality. He describes it as "rich, unadulterate, and fit drink for the gods," and as so potent, that it was usually mixed with twenty measures of water,—

"And even then the beaker breathed abroad
A scent celestial, which whoever smelt,
No pleasure found it thenceforth to abstain."

Other parts of Thrace were famous for their wines, but Ismarus seemed to have longest maintained its credit. The Pramnian, a red, but not a sweet wine, and of equal antiquity, was a strong, hard, astringent liquor, remarkably fervid and durable, and was much commended for its medicinal properties. The Athenians, however, appear to have had little relish for a beverage of this character, and "abominated the harsh Pramnian wine," Aristophanes tells us, "which shrivelled the features, and obstructed the digestive organs." In the age of Pliny, the Pramnian was still a noted growth of the vicinity of Smyrna. Some of the Bithynian wines were of the choicest quality: the produce of Byblos, in Phœnicia, on the other hand, vied in fragrancv with the Lesbian; and the white varieties of Lake Mareotis and Tœnia, in Lower Egypt, were of almost unrivalled excellence. But the wine of Merœe, now called Nuabia, an island of Ethiopia, which was provided at the feast given to Cæsar by the voluptuous Cleopatra, appears to have surpassed all others in estimation, and to have borne some resemblance to the Falernian.

The sweet wines of the Greeks were principally of the luscious kind, like the produce of the present Cyprus or Constantia grapes, and they were accustomed to have

their beverages cooled and iced in various ways. None of the more generous sorts were reckoned fit for use before the fifth year, and the majority of them were kept for a much longer period. The richer dessert-wines mostly in use among the Greeks were the Thasian and Lesbian,—among the Romans, the Cecuban, Albanian, and Falernian; and, after their knowledge of the produce of foreign countries, the Chian and Lesbian.


“Nor can Italian wines produce the shape,
Or taste or flavour of the Lesbian grape.
The Thasian vines in richer soils abound,
The Mareotic grow in barren ground.
The Pythian grape we dry: Legæan juice
Will stammering tongues and staggering feet produce;
The Aminean many a consulship survives,
And longer than the Lydian vintage lives.”—*Georgics*, b. ii.

The Cecuban, grown in the poplar marshes of Amycla, is described by Galen as a generous, durable wine, but apt to affect the head, and ripening only after a long term of years. It appears to have been a favourite wine with Horace, who speaks of it as being often reserved for important festivals: when new, it belonged to the rough sweet class. Among modern wines, Madeira has been conjectured to offer the nearest resemblance to Falernian.



SECTION III.

*Ambrosial Nectar of the Antients: their gorgeous
Cups and Festal Customs.*

IN the palmy days of Greece and Rome the art of distillation was unknown, and though practised by chemists so early as the twelfth century, it was not until the commencement of the eighteenth that its application became general. We are indebted to the Arabs for the invention, and it is supposed to have been brought into Spain by the Moors; yet that the antients knew how to manufacture and appreciate good wine, is clearly proved by the accounts left by Galen, Pliny, and others. Poets, philosophers, and historians, indeed, have all joined in celebrating the virtues of wine, and must therefore have been perfectly cognizant of it in its best and most refined state,—a notion faintly echoed, perhaps, in the well-worn legendary distich,—

“Zeno, Plato, Aristotle,
All were lovers of the bottle.”

It is, moreover, highly improbable that Homer should have lauded the wine of his time as a ‘divine beverage,’ or that the Lesbian grape should have been praised for its delicious fragrancy, or Sappian wine extolled as emitting the odour of violets, hyacinths, and roses, and as filling the house with the perfume of nectar and ambrosia when first broached,* unless these liquors had possessed qualities which rendered them as

* There is a striking coincidence between this description of the Sappian, and the account given of old Tokay wine by a learned German author, who writes, “I have drunk some that was forty years old, and which, on being poured into the glass, immediately filled the whole room with an aromatic ethereal odour.”

agreeable and fascinating to the senses as such panegyrics would imply.

As in all the more southern climates the grape attains its full maturity, and its juice abounds in the saccharine principle, a large proportion of the Greek and Asiatic wines may be fairly assumed to have been of the sweet and strong kind. Homer seldom speaks of wine without using some phrase to denote its richness or its honeyed sweetness, and he frequently adopts significant compound words to give fuller effect to his description. This dulcet quality, however, was by no means their sole criterion of excellence, for wines tempered by a certain degree of sharpness or astringency were held in the highest estimation. Indeed, several of the Greek dry kinds possessed extraordinary rough and acrid properties, only becoming drinkable when kept a number of years; and that sweetness was not deemed the sole requisite for a good wine may be inferred from the remark of Pliny, that the luscious sorts are usually deficient in flavour; but this censure must be understood as applying chiefly to the syrupy class, which had undergone imperfect or no fermentation at all. When this process was effected in the natural manner, when the excess of sugar was tempered by a certain amount of sharpness or astringency, and when the saccharine element was still further decomposed by long keeping, wines of this character were found to be no longer cloying to the palate, and accordingly ranked high in favour as possessing the most exquisite combination of tastes that liquors can acquire. When wine was found deficient in saccharine quality, it was mixed with honey, and then called *mulsum*,—the origin, it is thought, of the many processes

subsequently adopted for preserving and enhancing the sweetness of wine.

The most ancient receptacles for wine were probably the skins of animals, rendered impervious by oil or resinous gums. When Ulysses proceeded to the cave of Polyphemus, he is described as carrying with him a goat-skin filled with the rich black wine which he received from Maron, the priest of Apollo. In the celebrated festal procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus, there is said to have been a *car*, twenty-five cubits in length and fourteen in breadth, in which was borne a *uter* made of panthers' hides, and containing 3000 amphoræ of wine, which was allowed to flow from it slowly as it was dragged along,—protected, probably, by some outer casing, or it could not have resisted the lateral pressure of so large a bulk of fluid. As the arts improved, vessels of clay were introduced, and the method of glazing them being as yet unknown, a coating of pitch was applied in order to prevent the exudation of the liquor. In some places where wood abounded, wine-casks were made of that material; but the vessels commonly in use among the Greeks and Romans were of earthenware, and great nicety was displayed in choosing for their construction such clay as was least porous, and best bore the action of the furnace. They had, for the most part, a bulging shape, with a wide mouth; and the lips were turned out in such a way, as to prevent the ashes or pitch with which they were smeared from falling in when the cover was removed. When new, these vessels received their coating immediately on their removal from the kiln. As such of them as were of any considerable size were liable to rents and other accidents, it was customary to bind

them with leaden or oaken hoops, in order to preserve them entire. The *urna*, equal to half an amphora, was generally of an elegant form, with a narrow neck, to which two handles were attached, the body tapering towards the bottom.

For the more precious wines the antients occasionally employed vessels of glass. The bottles, vases, cups, and other articles of that material, which may be seen in every antiquarian museum, prove that they had brought the fictile art to a high degree of perfection. Of the Greek artists, indeed, it may be truly affirmed that they embellished every thing which they touched. To the commonest utensils they gave, not only the most convenient forms, but a high degree of beauty, and it is from their *pateræ*, cups, and vases that the moderns have borrowed the happiest models for the service of their dinner-tables. Their inventive talents appear to have been constantly exercised in gratifying the taste for variety in drinking-vessels that prevailed among all ranks of the people, and who all sought to indulge according to their means, — the rich by forming large collections of cups on which the sculptor, lapidary, and jeweller had displayed the perfection of their skill; the poor by having their ivy and beechen bowls so curiously carved, that the beauty of the workmanship compensated for the meanness of the materials. Athens claimed the invention, and took the lead in the manufacture of porcelain vases; but the potteries of Samos soon rose into equal repute, and with those of Saguntum, in Spain, and two or three other towns in Italy, furnished the chief supply. Formed of the purest clay, they were celebrated for their extraordinary lightness, and were sometimes imbued with aromatic substances that im-

parted a grateful perfume to the liquor drank from them. The Egyptians, too, were long justly famed for their ingenious works in glass : they could give it all the clearness of rock-crystal, and were conversant with the art of gilding and staining it of various colours. The Alexandrians, in particular, are said to have brought the manufacture to such perfection, that they could imitate in that material every sort of porcelain ware ; and it was from the banks of the Nile that the Romans were supplied with wine-glasses, of which the use had become very general in the capital. Such, however, as affected much state despised what had become so cheap, and drank only from cups of gold, which, at the entertainments of the great, were frequently presented to the friends or guests whom the masters of the feast delighted to honour.

The triumph of Pompey brought the Romans acquainted with a new style of vases, called *murrhine* from the substance of which they were made. They were highly prized, and though at first dedicated solely to sacred purposes, afterwards came into common use among the wealthy and luxurious. Concerning the nature of these productions, the opinions of antiquaries are exceedingly vague and unsatisfactory. That they were formed from a natural fossil, and not an artificial paste or porcelain compound, is clear from the statement of Pliny,—that it was dug from the earth like rock-crystal. It could not be onyx, or a variegated agate or sardonyx, as evidenced by the existence of a certain murrhine bowl, that held three *sextarii*, and was valued at 80,000 *sestertii*, or £650 of our money. Its possessor, a person of consular rank, was so proud and eager in using it, that the edge of it bore the marks of

his teeth; yet these indentations enhanced the value rather than otherwise, as they served to manifest the genuineness of the material. "It is from the east," writes Pliny, "that the murrhine vases come to us. The blocks of stone from which they are manufactured are never of larger size than is sufficient for shaping into small trays, and in thickness rarely admit of the formation of such a cup as that above mentioned. It has a certain amount of lustre without the brilliancy of the precious gems, but is chiefly valued for its variegated colours, and its zones of purple and white and yellowish red, passing into each other, and refracting the light. That which shows the broadest or closest veins is preferred: transparency, or paleness of colour, is reckoned a defect. Much of the beauty also consists in the tubercles and crystals which are imbedded in its substance, and it is further distinguished by its perfume." From this description it may be fairly assumed that the murrhine vases were the product of a kind of fluor-spar, a fossil which is found in most regions of the globe, and the only one to which all the characters above described will apply. Spurious vases of this kind were supplied from Thebes,—probably an imitation in paste of the costly original.

The Greeks, though a highly polished people, and living in a temperate climate, are commonly reproached with their love of wine; and their parties of pleasure have been stigmatized by some writers as little else than mere drinking bouts. But the charge must be received with considerable reservation. They were acquainted with the culture of the vine from a very early period; their soil was exceedingly propitious to its growth, and luxury had made great progress among them at a time

when the manners of the Romans retained much of their primitive simplicity. Hence their older writers make more frequent mention of their convivial excesses, and more particular allusions to the wines which they drank, than are to be found in the contemporary authors of Rome. Yet although they may have often violated the laws of temperance, they were studious to preserve a certain degree of decorum in their feasts, and seldom gave in to such gross debauches as disgraced the Roman name under the emperors. When they drank freely, their wine was much diluted : to use it otherwise was held to be a proof of barbarism. To drink even equal parts of wine and water was thought to be unsafe ; and the dilution was frequently still more considerable, varying, according to individual taste and judgment, from one part of wine and four of water, to two of wine and four, or else five parts of water, which last seems to have been the favourite standard. From Homer's statement of the dilution of the Maronean wine with twenty measures of water, and other similar authorities, some have inferred that the vinous produce of Greece possessed a degree of strength far surpassing any of the liquors of modern times, or of which we can well form an idea ; but it should be remembered that the wines in question were not only inspissated, but also highly impregnated with various aromatic ingredients, and had often contracted a repulsive bitterness from age, that rendered them unfit for use till they were lowered by a large addition of water. If they had equalled the purest alcohol in strength, the above reduction must have been more than enough ; but the strong heterogeneous taste they had acquired would render further dilution desirable, and, in truth, they may be said to

have been used principally for the purpose of giving a flavour to the water. Since water, then, entered so largely into their ordinary beverages, the antients spared neither labour nor expense to obtain it in the purest state, and to ensure an abundant supply from those fountains and streams which were thought to yield it of the most grateful and salubrious quality. As the wines so diluted were frequently taken warm, hot water became an indispensable article at their entertainments. It may be doubted, however, whether the use of such mawkish potations was an habitual practice, or was resorted to merely as a remedy for temporary derangements of the system, and by persons of infirm health, who partook of them as an article of regimen. The prescription, indeed, was not always adopted from choice, and so far was mere hot water from being considered a luxury by the Romans, that we find Seneca speaking of it as fit only for the sick, and as quite insufferable to those who were accustomed to the delicacies of life. In certain conditions of the stomach, however, as in that which proceeds from an immoderate indulgence in the pleasures of the table, or from gross and indigestible food, it cannot be gainsaid that hot water will allay the uneasy sensations more effectually than cold; and as the Romans were notorious for their intemperance in eating, we may find in this fact the true explanation of their frequent calls for that pristine beverage.

The antients were also accustomed to have their liquors cooled and iced in various ways, and the practice of preserving snow for summer use must have obtained amongst oriental nations from the earliest ages. That it was long familiar to the Greeks and Romans is abundantly manifest. When Alexander the Great

besieged the town of Petra, in India, he directed a number of pits to be dug, and filled with snow, which being covered closely with oak branches, remained a long time undissolved. The Romans adopted a similar expedient for conserving the snow they collected from the mountains, which, in the time of Seneca, had become an important article of merchandise at Rome, being sold, not only in shops appropriated to the purpose, but even hawked about the streets, and the modern inhabitants are still supplied with it in a similar manner. It is amusing to note the loud lament of Seneca with respect to this very harmless species of indulgence. "To what a pitch," he exclaims, "have our artificial wants brought us, that common water, which nature has caused to flow in such profusion, and destined to be the common beverage of man and other animals, should, by the ingenuity of luxury, be converted into an article of traffic, and sold at a stated price! The Lacedemonians banished perfumers from their city and territory because of the waste of oil occasioned by their trade. What would they have done if they had seen our shops and storehouses for snow, and so many beasts of burthen employed in carrying this commodity, dirtied and discoloured by the straw in which it is kept? You may behold certain lean fellows, wrapped up to the chin to defend them from the cold, and pale and sickly in appearance, who not only drink, but even eat snow, putting lumps of it into their cups during the intervals of drinking. Do you imagine this to be thirst? It is a true fever, and of the most malignant kind." These and other like declamations, however, passed unheeded; the usage became universal: nor was it confined to the summer months, but by many was continued through

the depth of winter, as is still the case in the south of Italy, where iced water has become a prime necessity, and is sought for, at all seasons, with an avidity which, to a native of our northern clime, appears, at first view, quite unaccountable. "It is from a volcano," remarked the observant Dr. Irvine, "that the inhabitants are abundantly supplied with this coveted refreshment. The noise and tumult at the houses where the snow is sold as fast as it arrives from Etna is incredible, and even alarming to a stranger; and I thought, the first time, that nothing less than murder could have occurred within, seeing the doors besieged by so clamorous a mob. When the thermometer is at 88° of Fahrenheit in the shade, there is something in this eagerness which we can understand; but in this country, when snow is lying on the ground, when cold and damp winds send one shivering for shelter, even then the Sicilian must have his iced water. There is no weather so cold as to drive him from his wonted indulgence: he seems as if resolved to make the greater cold expel the less."

At the banquets of heroic times each guest had a separate cup; and larger ones and purer wine were presented to the chiefs, or those friends whom the master of the feast wished to distinguish. It was also a mark of respect to keep their cups always replenished, that they might drink as freely and frequently as they desired. At the conclusion of the repast, pure wine was handed round; but before it was tasted, a portion of it was poured on the floor or table, as an oblation to Jupiter and the gods; and the cup was always filled to the brim, as it was held disrespectful to offer any thing in sacrifice but what was full and perfect. Hence the goblets were said to be crowned with wine. With a view to

maintain order and conviviality in the proceedings, and to see that all the company drank fairly, a president of the feast was appointed, who was either the giver of the entertainment, or one of the guests chosen by lot. In all matters relating to the formalities of the table his authority was absolute, and none durst dispute his mandates as long as he remained in the company—the rule being either to drink or to be gone; *aut bibat, aut abeat*. When the richer wines were circulated, it was usual for the person presiding to begin the round by pledging the principal parties; that is, he tasted the wine and saluted the company, or the guest on his right hand if a person of distinction, to whom the cup was then passed, and who was expected to finish its contents. To drink in this manner was considered a proof of friendship, and when so presented it was termed a bumper glass.* It was also a common practice at the convivial meetings of both nations to drink to the health of eminent individuals, as well as to the absent friends and lovers of the persons present; and the degree of respect or attachment entertained for those so toasted, was supposed to be indicated by the greater or less number of cups which the proposer filled out to their honour. The guests were further served with garlands, or roses and other flowers in season, which they wore, not only on their heads, but sometimes also about their necks and arms. They wanted for no manner of diversion whilst at dinner, having ordinarily

* The word *bumper*, which has sadly puzzled etymologists, is merely a slight corruption of the old French phrase *bon per*, signifying a boon companion. To drink a cup of good fellowship, or bumper-health, may therefore be regarded as strictly synonymous with the Grecian equivalent phrase.

music and antique dances, instead of the gladiatorial combats of earlier times,—

“When, tossing round the sparkling brim
Their locks of floating gold,
With bacchant dance and choral hymn
Return the nymphs of old.” — *O. W. Holmes.*

In the days of Homer but little variety seems to have attended the festive board. Roast-beef was the ordinary fare of the Trojan heroes, and with them it was held to be no degradation to kill their own meat and dress their own dinners. In the course of time, as commerce extended and the arts of life advanced, the repasts of the Greeks became conspicuous for the multiplicity of dishes, as well as for the skill and refinement exercised in their preparation. The gratification of the palate, previously deemed unworthy of notice, now grew to be a matter of paramount importance, and poets and philosophers vied with each other in the composition of voluminous treatises on the art of cookery. Aristotle is said to have exercised his genius in the compilation of a code of laws for the table, wherein he signalized his decided preference for fish. When the Greeks and Romans, in imitation of the Asiatic nations, adopted the custom of reclining at their meals, great magnificence was displayed in the construction of the couches. The frames were inlaid with ivory, tortoise-shell, or the precious metals; the feet being formed of solid ivory or bronze, and the coverlets of purple cloth enriched with embroidery. Many were composed entirely of silver, and even golden beds were not unknown. Of the magnitude and vast expense of their public entertainments some notion may be gathered from the statement of Plutarch, that Julius Cæsar once, in a treat

which he gave to the people, provided no less than 22,000 couches, each sufficiently capacious to accommodate three persons. On select occasions, the appropriate number to invite was considered, according to Varro, to be not fewer than three, or more than nine, as expressive of the number of the Graces or the Muses.

A comparison instituted between the forms and usages of these early times and the recognised customs of the present day would reveal numerous coincidences. The arrangements of our dinners, the succession and composition of the different courses, the manner of filling our glasses, of pledging our friends, and of drinking particular healths are all evidently descended from the Greeks and Romans; and although certain peculiarities in our climate and habits may have rendered the practice of bumper-cups and undiluted liquors more frequent than commendable, yet the ordinary distribution of wines at our feasts cannot be considered as differing greatly from that here mentioned. Exception, however, must be made of one striking contrast that existed between the customs of the two nations: the Romans allowed their women to be present at their festive meetings, but forbade them the use of wine; while the Greeks permitted them to drink wine, but excluded them from all entertainments at which any but near relatives were present. In more primitive times still, the females of the family occasionally appeared, performing the office of cup-bearers, and other table services.

The vine was not planted in the environs of Rome much before the year 600 u.c., and until then it is doubtful whether the Romans were much accustomed to the use of wine, for the constant predatory warfare

with neighbouring states in which they were previously involved, must have prevented them from giving that attention to its culture indispensable for bringing the produce to any degree of perfection. Yet few parts of Italy proved unfriendly to the vine, and it flourished most in that portion of the coast to which, from its extraordinary fertility and delightful climate, the name of Campania Felix was given. The exuberant produce of the rich and inexhaustible soil of the whole of this district has called forth the eulogies of every writer who has had occasion to mention it. "The Campania," says Florus, "is the most beautiful region, not only of Italy, but of the whole globe. Nothing can surpass the mildness of its climate, for it is blessed with a double spring; nothing can exceed the fecundity of its soil,—hence the contest between Ceres and Bacchus for its possession. Here are the vine-covered hills of Gaurus, Falernus, Massicus, and, above all, Vesuvius, the rival, as it were, of the Ætnean fires."

From this district the Romans obtained the vintages which they valued most highly, and of which the fame extended to all parts of the world. Pliny informs us that "Augustus, and most of the leading men of his time, gave the preference to the Setine wine, from the vineyards above the Forum Appii, as being of all kinds the least apt to derange the stomach. Formerly the Cecuban was most esteemed, but it has now lost its repute, partly from the negligence of the growers, and partly from the limited extent of the vineyard." It is not a little singular, he further remarks, "that none of the grapes of Campania are at all pleasant to the taste." No wine, however, has in any age acquired such extensive celebrity as the Falernian, or more truly merited the

appellation of "immortal" conferred upon it by the poet Martial; at least, of all ancient wines it is the one most generally known in modern times, for while other eminent growths are overlooked or forgotten, few classic readers will be found who have not learned something of the Falernian. But although the name is thus familiar to most, few attempts have been made to determine its exact nature and properties; and little more is understood concerning it than that the ancients valued it highly, kept it until it became very old, and produced it only when they wished to regale their dearest friends. All writers, however, agree in describing the Falernian wine as very strong and durable, and so rough in its early state that it could not be drunk with pleasure, requiring to be stored a great number of years before it was sufficiently mellow. Horace even terms it a "fiery" wine, and calls for water from the spring to moderate its strength; and Persius applies to it the epithet "indomitum," in allusion to its heady quality. The excellence of this wine was probably mainly due to the loose volcanic soil on which it was produced, and its fame must descend to the latest ages along with the works of the mighty masters of the lyre who have sung its praises.



SECTION IV.

Modern Wines : their Character and Qualities.

GRADATIONS in taste, body, and odour are unavoidable incidents in the manufacture of wine, and these, doubtless, originate chiefly in the peculiarities of varying soils, since there can be no question that they continue more or less distinct in the produce of particular localities, notwithstanding great differences in the shelter for the plant and the warmth of the seasons ; but it is equally certain that the latter circumstance has also a considerable influence on these properties, which are, indeed, of so delicate and inconstant a nature, that they may be said to vary from year to year, there being hardly two vintages, though collected from the same spot, and managed with the same care, that will be found completely identical in flavour and perfume. That a vine is a vine, and a vineyard a plantation of vines, no one will dispute ; but although the plant be the same, there may be veins of different soil, and a vineyard with different aspects,—inequalities from which it would be unreasonable to expect that all its fruit should be precisely similar in character or quality. If a soil be of sand or chalk, or both, a dry wine will be the product, (as in Xeres) ; if schistous, richness will result, (as in the Alto-Douro) ; and if deep clay, an earthy and watery flavour is certain, (as in Figuera wines). The plant and the soil over a whole estate may be the same, yet with varying aspects the

wine of one part may be mellow and delicious, and in the other acrid and immature. It is evident, moreover, that quality must always be affected by every change of condition in which the fermentation of the juice takes place. It is obscured by the use of bad methods; it is often eclipsed by the injurious admixtures to which wine is frequently subjected after it is made.

Though in describing wines it is not unusual to speak of the "flavour of the fruit," yet none of the red class can properly be said to retain the taste and aroma of the grapes from which they are made; whilst white muscadine wines, in whatever soils they may be grown, always partake more or less of the innate quality of the fruit. This is particularly observable in the produce of the Frontignan vine. All wines, however, possess what is called the vinous flavour, emanating from the alcohol which they contain, and modified in the different varieties according to the proportions in which that ingredient is combined with the aqueous, acid, saline, mucilaginous, and aromatic principles. In good wine none of these should predominate, but the whole ought to form a perfect compound, having its distinct and peculiar flavour, which should be full and entire, not cloying on the palate, or leaving any strange or unpleasant after-taste. In the production of certain descriptions, however, we are sometimes obliged to forego this kind of excellence, in order to obtain other peculiar properties. The virtues of the brisk wines of Champagne, for example, reside in the carbonic acid gas, which in a great measure escapes when the pressure is withdrawn by which it was retained in union with the water and the mucilage, carrying along with it much of the alcohol and aroma. The grateful proper-

ties of the sweet class, on the other hand, depend on the abundance of saccharine matter that remains undecomposed; and the vinous attributes of some of the Burgundy sorts are sacrificed, in order to preserve the fragrant bouquet and superior delicacy for which they are so justly admired.

White wines may be regarded, in some points of view, as more perfect than the red,—at least they appear to contain fewer elements of decomposition. The strong red sorts, which are fermented with the hulls, and often with the stalks of the grapes, do not attain their highest condition until after they have deposited a considerable portion of their tartar and colouring matter; but the lighter kinds are generally in perfection before this change occurs, for when they lose colour, they speedily alter and pass into a vapid state. White varieties, on the contrary, even when of inferior quality, will remain much longer unchanged, probably because they contain less mucilaginous and extractive matter, and when well fermented, may be preserved for an indefinite length of time. Usually, however, they yield to the red in respect of flavour and perfume. The colour of red wines varies from a light pink to a deep purple tint, approaching to black: the clarets hold the intermediate point between the two extremes. Of the white kinds, some are nearly colourless, but the greater proportion have a yellow or amber tinge. They deposit a small portion of tartar, but seldom much extractive matter. The *fine* wines are distinguishable from the *ordinary* by their character, aroma, and body; they always improve by long keeping; but many of the *secondary* sorts, with due care and management, will retain their qualities unimpaired for a considerable period. The *common* wines

constitute the lowest class, and are seldom known beyond the limits of the district where they are produced. Weak vintages, which generally contain an excess of mucilage, are the most liable to spoil; they often turn acid and ropy, and commonly end in becoming vapid and worthless.

All wine, wherever might be the seat of its production, contains a determinate quantity of spirit, either inherent or introduced by the merchant to fortify it for transit. The average of sixty-six varieties submitted to analysis is stated by Sir James E. Tennent, in his book on the *Wine Duties*, to have been seventeen per cent., and the proportion of alcohol to be in —

	per cent.		per cent.		per cent.
Port wine . . .	22	Malaga . . .	18	Madeira . . .	22 to 24
Sauterne . . .	14	Teneriffe . . .	19	Sherry . . .	20
White Hermitage	17	Colares Port . .	19	Marsala . . .	25
Masdeu . . .	19	South African	22	Etna Port . . .	30

To establish the principle of vinous spirituousity on a correct and permanent basis, and in furtherance of the objects comprised in the recent Act relating to the import of foreign wines, the British government in 1861 directed a special commission of inquiry for the purpose of ascertaining the respective natural strength of wines, before any alcoholic admixture, in the principal vine-growing countries of Europe. The official Parliamentary returns show that of fifty-six pure samples of French produce, eight yielded less than 18°, forty-four less than 26°, and only four exceeded that limit; in Portugal, of thirteen samples twelve were under 26°; in Spain, of eighteen samples three only were under 26°; in Hungary, ten out of eleven were under 26°; in Germany, of seven samples tested all were under 26°; in Austria, Switzerland, Bavaria, Italy, and Sicily, fifteen samples

were tried, four proving under 18°, ten under 26°, and one above that strength.

That the wines of France constituted the chief beverage of the wealthier orders in England from the fourteenth to the first half of the eighteenth century, is fully established by the testimony of historians, as well as by official documents. When the many laudable attempts to naturalize the culture of the vine in this country succumbed to the unpropitious influences of a humid and variable climate, the community were entirely dependent for their supplies on the product of neighbouring and more genial states; and certainly, whilst good foreign wine was procurable at moderate prices, little advantage could accrue from a desire to supplant its use by costly native growths, for of all annual crops that of the vine is the most precarious. If the grape will not always ripen even in Champagne, it must be absurd to expect it to thrive in an atmosphere so inconstant as that of Britain, and any futile diversion of our cereal lands into vineyards would be a shallow endeavour to reverse the obvious designs of nature. In many provinces of France the vine does little more than repay its cost of cultivation; and it is a curious fact, that in the thirty-five years from 1820 to 1854, only fourteen prime vintages were harvested in that propitious region. In Normandy and Picardy, where the heat of the summer is greater than in England, vine culture has been gradually relinquished, and all the renewed efforts to establish it in this country, although they appeared to succeed for a time, have ultimately failed.

Stowe, indeed, assures us, that "In many parts of England they grow vines and make wine; and in the reign of Richard the Second, such was the abundance of

grapes in Windsor Park, that the king sold and made money by them." Yet even this notable progress, promising as it appeared at the time, was not sufficient to lead to any beneficial permanent results; and the several further attempts in more recent days to revive this species of culture, and to manufacture wines from English grapes, proved equally unsuccessful. Thus, according to Philpotts, one Captain Toke "hath so industriously and elegantly cultivated our English vines at Godington, in Kent, that the wine pressed and extracted out of their grapes seems not only to parallel, but almost to outrival that of France;" and, for some years, the Duke of Norfolk made a considerable quantity of wine from a vineyard at Arundel Castle, which, according to the report of a writer in the *Museum Rusticum*, excelled much of the Burgundy imported into this country, though he candidly admits it was not "of quite so fine a flavour as the wines of Beaune." In order to give the experiment a last chance of success, Sir Richard Worsley, about the end of the last century, procured some of the most hardy species of vines, planted them in a rocky soil, with a southern exposure, at St. Laurence, in the Isle of Wight, and engaged a vine-dresser from France to superintend their culture. The result was, that in one or two favourable years a tolerable crop of grapes was garnered; but eventually the cold springs weakened the plants and blighted the produce, and the scheme soon fell out of favour and was finally abandoned.

The union that subsisted between England and the northern provinces of France after the Norman conquest, but especially on the acquisition of Guienne in 1152, naturally led to an interchange of commodities between the two countries. Accordingly we find, that in two

years from this date the trade in wines with Bordeaux had commenced; and in 1273 no less than 8,846 tuns were imported from Gascony and Anjou, the duty levied at that period being only two shillings the tun. The retail price of this wine in London in 1300 was threepence per gallon, and beer one penny. At one time seventy-three vessels arrived, each having on board nineteen tuns of wine, of which the Crown claimed one tun before and another behind the mast. In 1372 two hundred English vessels arrived together at Bordeaux, which came to load for wine.

Among our older statutes there are numerous ordinances affecting the importation of French wines, most of which, in conformity with the mistaken notions of political economy in those days, fix a maximum price for their sale. Thus, in the first year of King John it was enacted that the wines of Anjou should not be sold for more than 24s. a-tun,* and that the product of Poitu, sometimes called Rochelle wine from the port of shipment, should not be higher than 20s.; while the other wines of France were limited to 25s. a-tun, "unless they were so good as to induce any one to give for them two marks or more." This would appear to be the earliest statute on the subject of the foreign wine trade. Both Anjou and Poitu at that time belonged to England. For ordinary use, the wines of the latter province were directed to be sold at fourpence the gallon, of the former at sixpence; but, according to Harrison, "this ordinance did not last long, for the merchants could not bear it; so they fell to, and sold white wine for eightpence the gallon, and red and claret for sixpence." In the following reign the importations would appear to

* A tun of wine is equal to two pipes.

have increased; and most of the chronicles attribute the neglect of the English vine-grounds to a growing fondness for French produce.

At the period of the fourteenth century the English were mainly dependent upon Gascony for the supply of clarets and other lighter wines, when various laws were enacted from time to time for the regulation of commerce with that province, which had already reached some magnitude, notwithstanding it was hampered by many arbitrary restrictions. By the 5th of Richard II. it is directed that the best wines of Gascony, Osey, Spain, and the Rhine shall be sold for 100 shillings, and the best Rochelle at six marks the tun; and by retail, the former at sixpence, the latter at fourpence the gallon. In 1381 the price is stated to have risen considerably; but in the year 1387, if we may credit Holinshed, there was such abundance of wine that "it was sold for 13s. 4d. the tun, and for 20 shillings the best and choicest." Edward III. issued several ordinances regarding wine, and curtailed English freedom by forbidding his subjects from any personal intercourse with Guienne,—a prohibition subsequently modified by the intervention of the Black Prince. Richard III., in whose reign came the "wine of Tyre," the Helbon of Scripture, decreed that wines should be only imported in butts of 126 gallons, with a view to prevent fraud in the customs duties and covert enhancement of price by the varying size of the casks. The money-value of claret north of the Tweed in 1493, is ascertained from entries in the trade-ledger of a Scotch merchant of that period, named Andrew Haliburton, who resided at Middleburgh, and attended the fairs of Berri, Bruges, and Antwerp. Professor Innes, in his *Scotland in the*

Middle Ages, describes it as by far the oldest merchant's book preserved in that part of the kingdom, and, with other curious mercantile particulars, he quotes from it these items: "A certain 'Andro Mowbray younger' exported cloth and large quantities of skins, and got in return awms of Rhine wine, and tuns of Gascon claret, (the latter cost 4*l.* the tun,) with 2 butts of Malwissy, bought from Jan Breganden for 12*l.*"—"The Arch-deacon of St. Andrew's sent occasionally wool and hides, with barrels of pickled salmon and trout, receiving in exchange, besides other foreign articles, puncheons of wine,—claret costing 16 shillings the puncheon." The wines of Guienne and Gascony continued to be largely consumed in England until the sixteenth century, when those of Spain first divided with them the public taste.

In the reign of Henry VIII. the wines of Gascony were forbidden to be sold at more than eightpence the gallon; and a subsequent statute of 7 Edward VI., called an "Act to avoyde Excesse of Wines," besides other provisions for the regulation of prices, contains various enactments for controlling their sale in a manner that had never before been attempted, and amongst them are the following curious clauses: 1. "None but such as can spend one hundred marks of yearly rent, or is worth one thousand marks, or else shall be the son of a duke, marquis, earl, viscount, or baron of the realm, shall have or keep in his house any vessel of foreign wine for his family's use exceeding ten gallons, under a penalty of ten pounds for every such offence."—2. "Merchants may use in their own houses, but not sell, such wines as they shall import: also high sheriffs, magistrates, and the inhabitants of fortified towns may keep vessels of wine for their own consumption only."

In addition, no taverns were permitted to be set up for the retailing of wine, save in towns or cities; and then only two to be allowed, except in London and some other places, with a specified number for each. The English, however, were now too much accustomed to wine to be restrained by any sumptuary laws from indulging their taste for that luxury, and considering the few millions of inhabitants, the quantity brought from various countries in olden time is truly astonishing. "Butts of the wine called Malvesey," says the preamble to an Act of that period, "were wont, in great plenty, to be brought into this realm to be sold before the 27th year of the reign of Henry IV., late indeed, but not of right, king of England; and then a man might buy of the merchant stranger, by mean of the said plenty, for 50s. or 53s. 4d. a-butt at the most, he taking for his payment thereof two parts in wollen cloth wrought in this realm, and the third part in ready money." In the records edited by Mr. Froude we read of 1546, "And for wines we have continually from France and Spain, as also out of Almaine and out of Candia, great quantity of the best that grow in these parts. The Flemings do buy much of our beer because it is better than theirs, and pay almost as much for it as we do the Frenchmen for their wine." Of the large consumption in those days, some idea may be formed from the expenditure for wine at great entertainments, and the liberality exercised in the houses of the nobility. At the enthronization of the Archbishop of York, in the sixth year of Edward IV., one hundred tuns of wine were drunk. His predecessor is said to have used eighty tuns of Claret yearly in his house; and the consumption of wine in the establishment of the Earl of Shrewsbury exceeded

two tuns in the month. In the Earl of Northumberland's household, however, which was regulated with the utmost economy, the yearly allowance of wine did not exceed forty-two hogsheads. Malvasia, Romenay, Osey, Bastard, Muscadels, "and other sweet wines," came to England in the fourteenth century, and the historical accounts given of the mode of living in the time of Queen Elizabeth testify to the great abundance and variety of foreign wines in use in her day. The growths then chiefly in demand were those of Gascony, Burgundy, and Guienne; which, with Canary, Cyprus, Grecian Malmsey,* Italian Vernage, Rhenish Tent, Malaga, and others, as Holinshed quaintly expresses it, "well accounted of, because of their strength and valure." In 1633, Charles I. ordered that the best wines of Guienne should not be sold for more than 18*l.* sterling the tun, and retail at sixpence per quart. Inferior qualities were restricted to 15*l.* The tavern charge of the wines of Aquitaine was fixed by Charles II., in 1672, at sixteen pence; and eighteen years after it was raised to twenty-four pence, which was the last sale price fixed by royal authority. Nearly down to the revolution of 1688 French produce was consumed largely, and since that period the wines in use have been chiefly Portuguese and Spanish.

In the arbitrary period of the middle ages a notable practice arose, of ruling the people, and controlling their habits and tastes, through the medium of certain sumptuary laws, occasionally issued to that end. Hence it may be more a matter of interest and curiosity than surprise to observe, on consulting the municipal archives of London,—that London which can boast

* Malmsey, a corruption of Malvasia, or Malmvesey, was a name applied generally to the rich wines of the Grecian Archipelago.

full eighteen centuries as her own,—the paternal and watchful solicitude manifested by the vigilant corporation of those days for the peace and welfare of the community. The city records are very ancient and complete, extend over nine hundred years, and are unrivalled by any corporate muniments extant. From this source we learn that the care of these sage and worthy fathers was directed, not only to the formalities of local government, the preservation of order, and the prevention and prompt removal of obstructions and nuisances of every kind, but extended to a vigorous supervision of the purveyors and dealers in food and drink. Butchers and bakers, poulterers and fishmongers, brewers and tapsters were alike subject to stringent control, and the regulations concerning them were numerous and precise. In the middle ages “forestalling and regrating” were regarded and denounced as the worst of civic crimes, nor was the pillory an infrequent elevation for fraudulent bakers. A strict superintendence was also exercised over “hostelers and brewsters,” and the latter were commanded to vend their ale at one penny the gallon, and the best at three-halfpence. Selling at a higher price, or short measure, was punished with graduated penalties up to a fourth conviction, when the petty delinquent was pronounced incorrigible, and sentenced to be deprived of the city franchise for ever. The taverners, who sold wines, were under yet sterner rule; for “persons going about by night do commonly resort to taverns more than elsewhere, and do there seek shelter, and watch their time to do ill.” So no one shall keep his tavern open after curfew has been rung, nor shall he allow any person in his house, “sleeping or sitting up.” They were also to send in their measures to be sealed; they were not to

put their new wines in the same cellar as the old, nor the French and Spanish with the Rhenish. The sale of mixed wine, or of "wine made by himself," was punished with the pillory. These enactments do not show what kinds of wine were in greatest favour with our forefathers, but whilst ordinary qualities in the thirteenth century were comparatively low in price (about one penny a-bottle), occasional municipal memoranda refer to the purchase of more costly wines, apparently drunk at the taverns. "Wine in Bread-street, one penny," is a frequent entry; and we also find mention of a "Greek wine, fourpence," and "Vernage, sixpence."

The national use and taste of a people for wines may be said to be progressive with its civilization; and such has been the influence of custom in reconciling the palate to certain tastes, however incongruous, that they were sometimes rendered more vendible by having qualities imparted to them which in themselves are repulsive. We are apt to question the refinement of the antients, who could relish the factitious bitterness given to the produce of their vines by means of pitch, rosin, and salt-water, and yet are pleased with the acerbity and astringency which modern wines occasionally receive from the infusion of various harsh ingredients, ignoring and disdaining the combination of sweet and odoriferous herbs with which they scented and improved such as were of an inferior description. In this country it was not unusual, at the above period, to mix honey and spices with the wines, in order to cover the harshness and acidity common to most of them. Thus compounded, they passed under the generic name of *piments*, probably because they were originally prepared by the *pigmentarii*, or apothecaries,

and they were used much in the same manner as the liqueurs of modern times. The bards of the thirteenth century never speak of them but with rapture, and as an exquisite luxury. They esteemed it as the masterpiece of art to be able to combine in one liquor the strength and flavour of wine with the sweetness of honey and the perfume of the most costly aromatics. The archives of the cathedral of Paris show that, both in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the deans of Châteaufort were obliged to provide a regular supply of this sumptuous beverage for the canons at the feast of the Assumption. It was even, on particular days of the year, allowed to the monks in the monasteries; and any banquet at which no piment was served would have been thought paltry, and deficient in the most coveted essential. The varieties of piment most frequently mentioned are the *hippocras* and *clarry*. The former was made with either white or red wine, in which different aromatic ingredients were infused, and took its name from the particular bag called 'Hippocrates' sleeve,' through which it was strained. It was taken, at all great entertainments, between the courses, or at the conclusion of the repast, and wafers and manchets are directed to be served with it. *Clarry*, on the other hand, was a claret or mixed wine, sweetened with honey, and seasoned much in the same way. It is repeatedly named by our early poets, and appears to have been drunk by many fasting, or as a composing-draught before retiring to rest.

Of such medicated liqueurs two kinds only continue still in use; one being *Vermuth*, or wormwood wine, which is prepared in Hungary and some parts of Italy, and much valued as a gentle and agreeable tonic; and the

other a compound made by infusing one or more toasted Seville oranges in some light wine, and then sweetening to the taste with sugar. This preparation, when made with Burgundy or Bordeaux wine, is called *bishop*; when old Rhine wine is used, it receives the name of *cardinal*; and when Tokay is employed, it rejoices in the dignified appellation of *pope*. There is a curious recipe still extant, that gives directions how “to make ypocrass *for lords*, — with gynger, synamon, and graynes, sugour, and turesoll; and *for comyn pepull*, gynger, canell, longe pepper, and claryffied hony.” Another, from *The Duke’s Desk newly broken up*; by W. Lovell, Gent. and Traveller, 1661, reads thus:—
“To make Hipocras. Take a gallon of white wine, suger two pound, of sinamon 2 d. [drammes], ginger 2 d., long pepper 2 d., mase 2 d. not bruised, grafnes galigall 1 d., ob. cloves not bruised. You must bruise every kinde of spice a little, and put them in an earthen pot all day, and then cast them thorow your bags two times or more as you see cause, and so drink it.” The following unique morçeau, from the same source, is quoted as remarkable for its bold and knavish oddity:—
“To make a Tart to cause Courage in Man or Woman. Take two quinces, and two or three burre roots, and a potate; and pare your potate and scrape your roots, and put them into a quart of wine, and so let them boyle till they be tender; and put in one ounce of dates, and when they be boyled tender, draw them thorow a strainer, wine and all; and then put in the yolks of eight eggs, and the braines of three or four cock sparrows, and straine them into the other, and a little rosewater; and seeth them all with suger, sinamon, ginger, cloves, and mace, and also put in a little sweete butter, and set it upon a

chafingdish of coals between two platters; and so let it boyle till it be something thick."

The taste for sweet wines that now prevailed soon led to the importation of all the choicest kinds; they seem to have been used in considerable quantities, attended in the sixteenth century by a progressive augmentation of price. Malmsey, which in 1492 fetched only twopence a quart, sold for twice that sum in 1550; and three years afterwards it rose to fivepence, notwithstanding a law of Edward VI. had once more fixed it at threepence. It long continued the favourite wine, and is the only one of the sweet class specified in the ordinances of the household of Henry VIII., in whose reign, however, the much-lauded sack was first imported into this country. Its precise character and properties have long been the subject of diligent inquiry and much controversy; and considering how familiar our ancestors were with wines of this description, and what a large space they occupy in the writings of our best authors, it is not a little singular that its history and identity should have so long remained in obscurity, and that the question should continue still undecided.

"Wine, boy!

Wine o' my worship! Sack! Canary sack!"—*Old Play.*

Sack, probably, was first used as a generic name for white wines: occasionally the particular growth was specified, but for a long time the words sack and sherry appear to have been used indiscriminately for each other. Some have supposed that sack is derived from *saco*,—the *ódre* or *borracho* in which wine is carried;*

* A wine-skin made of hog or goat's hide, dressed with the hair inwards, and pitched or rosined, is called *ódre*, being in this form more convenient for carrying on the back of a mule, and cheaper than a cask. *Borracho*, as also *bota*, means a leathern bottle.

but the Spaniards do not apply *saco* to wine-skins. In Spanish dictionaries of a century and a half old, sack is given as *vino de Canarias*. Markham writes, "Your best sacks are of Xeres in Spain; your smaller of Gallicia and Portugal; and your strong sacks are of the islands of Canary and of Malligo." The Malaga sacks must have been not only stronger, but much sweeter than the other kinds, as by mixing them with Sherry a liquor resembling Canary wine was produced. It would thus seem that the term sack was applied equally to the sweet and dry wines of Canary, Xeres, and Malaga, which may serve to explain much of the confusion and diversity of opinion prevalent as to the true character of the wines so much extolled by our earlier playwrights and poets. The practice that existed of mixing sugar with sack has been thought by many persons to indicate a dry wine, such as Rhenish or Sherry; but there would be little humour in Falstaff's well-known jest on sack and sugar, if the liquor had not been of the sweet kind. Many authorities can be quoted that appear to warrant the inference that sack was a dry Spanish wine; but, on the other hand, numerous instances occur in which it is mentioned in conjunction with others of the richer class. The Act of Henry VIII. speaks of "sakkes or other sweete wines;" and we read in *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, "Give me a cup of sack,—an ocean of sweet sack." We also find mention of Canary sack, which differed materially from Sherry in character, and could not come within the description of a dry wine. In the early voyages to the Canaries, quoted by Hakluyt in 1598, there occurs this passage: "Nicols lived eight years in the islands. The isle of Teneriffe produces three sorts of wine,—

Canary, Malvasia, and Verdone, which may all go under the denomination of *sack*." The term is here meant to apply equally to the sweet and dry wines of Canary, Xeres, or Malaga.

Sack is similarly classed in a curious little volume, printed in 1638, entitled *THE TREE OF HUMANE LIFE, OR THE BLOYD OF THE GRAPE: proving the possibility of maintaining humane Life from Infancy to extreeme Old Age without any Sicknesse by the Use of Wine*: by Tobias Whitaker, Doctor in Physick of London, who further informs us, that "amonge the French wines there are many others, those commonly used and knowne to us being White, Claret, and Sack, and these also admit of their differences: for as there are severall sorts of Sack and Claret, so also are there of White wines, some sweet, some austere, some thick, others lympid and cleere,—and all these nourish much, but especially the sweet wines." This worthy son of Galen appears to have entertained very exalted notions respecting the nature and curative properties of wine. He describes it as "so transcending all other nutriment, as that just Noah makes it the first act of his husbandry, and planted a vineyard before either corne or any other grayne, as is affirmed by sacred testimony. The qualities of wine generally received among physitians are to nourish, and that above all aliments, sayeth Galen. It doth also corroborate, evacuate, correct putrefaction, open obstructions, and exhilarate the jaded spirits. And there is a great deale of reason why it should be so practised, for there is no other vegetal or minerall so safe, harmlesse, and familiar in itselfe to humane constitutions, as being naturally more pure and better concocted than any other juyce, either of

milke, egges, corne, fruits, or the like; the most of them, by reason of their crudity, breeding little bloud, or vitious bloud, or no bloud at all. . . . Thus man's life may be preserved free from any disease arising out of the mixture of naturall principles, from the infant age to the decrepid old age, except the principles be cast impure, from whence proceedeth weaker tempers, and many distempers which wee call hereditary diseases. And these also by art, and the artificial use and application of wine, may be much altered, and life beyond all expectation prolonged: and that which is counted the shame of physitians, and puts them so often to their wit's end,—viz. a consumption, hereditary or accidentall, and universall of the whole body, is no way to be cured better than by the right use of the plant. All physitians in this case have hitherto fione to milke of asses, and the like; but what is milke comparatively with this juyce, which indeed is fit for princes to receive, and physitians duly to study upon, that they may learnedly and rightly apply it; for great care and judgement ought to be urged for the safety and extension of life to extreame old age, which in many hath beene shortened by outlandish devices and kickchawes. As for my own experience, though I have not yet lived so long as to love excesse, yet I have seene such powerfull effects, both on myselfe and others, as, if I could render no other reason, they were enough to perswade me of its excellence, seeing extenuate withered bodies by it caused to be faire, fresh, plumpe, and fat; old and infirme to be young and sound, when, as water or small-beere drinkers, they look like apes rather than men."

The sack drank at gentlemen's tables is described in

passages of the older drama as a mixture of sherry, cider, and sugar; those adding more who did not think their's sweet enough. And we learn from a treatise by Venner, *temp.* 1620, that "sacke, taken by itself, is very hot and penetrative: being taken with sugar, the heat is somewhat allayed, and the penetrative quality thereof also retarded." Whatever may have been the exact nature of sack, it proved highly attractive and seductive to the gallants of that day. Herrick calls it a "frantic liquor," and revels with delight on its "witching beauties," "generous blood," &c.; and most of the dramatic writings of the age contain frequent allusions to its enlivening and other fascinating virtues.

"Oh! give me, kind Bacchus, thou god of the vine!
Not a pipe, nor a tun, but an ocean of wine;
And a ship that is manned by those jolly good fellows,
Who ne'er forsook tavern for portlerly alehouse."

NED WARD, *Author of the London Spy.*

Falstaff, too, while descanting on its excellent effects on the body and mind, says, that "A good sherris-sack hath a twofold operation in it: it ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish, and dull, and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, inventive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes, which delivered o'er to the voice (the tongue), which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The second property of your excellent sherris is,—the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice; but the sherris warms it, and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme. It illumineth the face, which, as a beacon, gives warning

to all the rest of this little kingdom (man) to arm, and then the vital commoners and inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain,—the heart; who, great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any deed of courage,—and this valour comes of sherris: So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work; and learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil, till sack commences it and sets it in act and use. If I had a thousand sons, the first human principle I would teach them should be,—to forswear thin potations, and addict themselves to sack.”

“Give me sacke,—old sacke, boys,
To make the Muses merry;
The life of mirth, and the joy of the earth,
Is a cup of good old sherry.”—*Pasquil*.

In the *Mystery of Vintners*, published in 1692, is given a recipe “to correct the ranknesse and eagernesne of wines, as Sack and Malago, or other sweete wines;” whether the Canary islands furnished any dry as well as sweet wines perhaps may be questioned; but it is clear that Canary sack resembled the liquor which still passes under that name. Sugar was customarily taken with Rhenish, and various other white wines. Judging, then, from what is observable of the wines of Spain, it is probable that many of them in those days were both dry and sweet, acquiring from age alone the dryness for which they were distinguished; and it may be fairly inferred, that the sack our merry Falstaff loved was rich, luscious, and “penetrative.”

It is somewhat noteworthy that at this period, and for a long time afterwards, most wines were retailed from the wood. An Act of 1638 even prohibits the sale

in bottles, and directs it to be supplied in future in just measures only,—an injudicious enactment, as the lighter wines, when in draught, cannot by any art be preserved sound in the cask above a certain number of weeks. But this may help to explain the origin of the complaints concerning the frequent adulteration of wine attributed to the vintners, as well as the object of the numerous receipts for “mending and restoring” wines met with in old writers.

The retail price of wine in 1618 was thirteen pence the full quart. The charge for a pint of Muscatel was sixpence: for a magnum of Canary of nine pints two shillings and sixpence. Two eight-gallon rundlets of Claret sixteen shillings. Three quarts of Sherry were to be had for two shillings, the vintner’s charge for the same being three shillings. In 1667 the price, as fixed at Oxford, was “Sack and Malagaes one shilling and sixpence the quart, and no more.” In 1673, however, it was advanced by the same authority to one shilling and tenpence the quart. In the reign of Charles II. the consumption of French wines was two-fifths that of the whole of England. The favourite vintages were those of Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Hermitage: Champagne, although known in this country so early as the time of Henry VIII., did not come into general use till after the Restoration.

Amid the gigantic developement of British commerce in almost every other direction, it is not a little singular that the consumption of wine in this country has not kept pace with the progress of population, whilst the demand for spirits has extended enormously. It can hardly be attributed to a growing sense of refinement and sobriety among the people, since the

relish for ardent spirit increases in a much larger ratio than the diminished use of wine ; and, certainly, if the juice of the grape is not replete with all that gives it the first place in human luxuries,—if the aroma, the bouquet, and piquancy of the genuine liquor are neither prized nor wanted, and heavy, dull intoxication and prostration of the faculties thought preferable to a pleasing cheerfulness, and to the draught which sustains and enlivens without injury or overwrought excitement, it would be extravagant and irrational to waste money on the products of foreign climes. Wine, however, has been ever the solace and delight of admiring nations, even from the days of the Flood, and it is difficult to imagine that more was not consumed in Great Britain when the population amounted to sixteen millions, than when it was only ten. Verily, the deficiency could not be owing to the badness of the times, for England in the interim had grown still more rapidly in material wealth than she multiplied in numbers.

Between the years 1801 and 1851 the consumption per head fell off 48 per cent. as compared with the increase of population.

Years	Population	Customs Revenue	Home Consumption, in gals.	Consumption per head
1801	15,500,000	2,185,561	6,376,710	0.431
1851	27,300,000	1,776,247	6,280,653	0.230

Much of this recession may be traced to the pernicious system of differential and prohibitory duties so pertinaciously adhered to by successive administrations, and the baneful tendency of restrictive regulations on social and sanitary purposes, no less than to financial considerations. It is at length wisely judged by our statesmen, that

revenue is better and easier raised by moderate imposts based on the intrinsic value or cost of the various articles imported, which alone can confer on commerce its fertilizing influence, and establish international feelings of amity and good will. The repulsive character of the fiscal charges placed on wine had long engaged the attention and disapproval of earnest politicians, as opposed to the liberal and enlightened commercial principles which now form the corner-stone of England's pre-eminence and prosperity. Although a discussion of the doctrine and precepts of free-trade might be fairly regarded as somewhat out of place here, as well as beyond the scope and tenour of the main purpose of this work, yet some of the notions involved are so antiquated and delusive, that a brief allusion to the prominent fallacies may not be altogether impertinent or devoid of interest.

From the period of the Norman conquest to the year 1660, the wines of Guienne, Poitu, and Gascony came in, subject to moderate duties, which by an Act of 12 Charles II., c. 4, was fixed at thirteen pence the gallon. The trade with France continued on this equitable basis until 1675, when popular clamour was sedulously fomented against so much freedom of interchange as erroneous and destructive; for the balance of trade, was it not pressing adversely against us? and that to the extent already of nearly a million sterling? England, consequently, must be on the very verge of ruin: her best interests were being compromised, her stability jeopardized, rents were falling, and all, it was argued, owing to so much hard cash passing over to France in payment of her staple products. The commercial compact established between the two countries was indignantly annulled, and in 1678 a British parliament

in its wisdom enacted that "the trade with France was detrimental to the kingdom,"—the stolid legislators of that day apparently insensible or indifferent to the policy and advantage of cultivating free mercantile intercourse with the most civilized and industrious nation on the mainland of Europe. The import of French wine was altogether prohibited from 1679 to 1685, when trade being again resumed, it extended itself yet more largely than before,—a transient prosperity, however, soon to be overshadowed by the antagonistic influences of the notable Methuen treaty with Portugal, more fully adverted to in another section. Matters were permitted thus to continue without material variation for an entire century, when a new commercial convention negotiated by Mr. Pitt in 1787 incurred the rebuke of rival political economists, who, with the insidious cry of "No reciprocity," charged him with a gratuitous sacrifice of 20,000*l.* of revenue, by reducing the impost on French wines from 96*l.* to 50*l.* the tun;—a differential duty of 34*l.* 13*s.* 8*d.* being, in their view, insufficient to protect the interests of Portugal, which, they contended, took our manufactures and the produce of our fisheries in exchange, instead of the specie payments exacted by our astute neighbours.

The assailants of the British minister were the worthy inheritors of the doctrines so rife in Charles's days, the same obliquity of vision or culpable indifference marking successive legislators down to the present reign. In the interim the wine duties remained in very inequitable disproportion to the item of first cost, ranging as they did from 200 to 600 per cent. on some of the red wines of Spain, whilst on the sherries they varied between 312 and 45 per cent. *ad valorem*. On French wines

the duty payable ranged from 400 to 22 per cent. ; on Lisbon from 338 to 154, and on Port from 221 to 66 per cent.,—a fiscal burthen, oppressive, impolitic, and unproductive. Whilst the consumption of other articles of foreign origin expanded above the ratio of an increasing population, that of wine alone stood still or receded. So convenient, however, and so congenial to men in office was the facile mode of levying these duties, that they viewed with unruffled complacency a diminution, between 1800 and 1850, of 700,000 gallons annually; and, in further aggravation of the mischief, the duty was tampered with and altered on several occasions, and even increased on all wines, but principally on those of France, which were taxed per gallon as follows:—

	s.	d.		s.	d.		s.	d.
In 1801	10	2½	In 1805	13	8½	In 1819	13	9
" 1802	10	7½	" 1809	19	8½	" 1825	7	2½
" 1803	12	5½	" 1813	19	3½	" 1826	7	3
" 1804	13	6½	" 1814	13	8½	" 1835	5	9

Under such depressing fluctuations, and burthened at one time with a fiscal impost of 19s. 8½d. on an article, the vintage price of which did not in some cases exceed 1s. or 1s. 6d., commercial energy must necessarily be paralysed, and consumption dwindle towards zero.—“No matter,” cries Red Tape, “wine is a luxury. We collect the duty without trouble, and are content to leave it where it is.”

Before closing this subject, in common fairness it should be mentioned, that so far back as 1713 proposals for a commercial tariff based on reciprocal duties of five per cent. were made to England by the French minister, M. de Torcy, which were hastily and contumeliously rejected. It was almost an axiom with the last century, that according as traffic with France was open

or close, the balance of trade constantly inclined for or against this country ; and it is rather amusing to see in the present day the same narrow views and shallow arguments reproduced in the interests of French manufacturers, and maintained with equal vigour and acrimony. In spite, however, of adverse legislation, the commerce of England continued to flourish, and after the lapse of two eventful centuries, by adopting and enforcing the principles of free barter, we tacitly admit that our primitive commercial notions were crude and erroneous, and that the permanent interests of nations and communities are best served and consolidated by unloosing the shackles unwisely imposed on mutual interchange and facility of traffic.

Prior to the year 1580 the English people were noted for their sobriety, when the introduction of pure alcohol about this period proved the forerunner of much social and eventful change. The art of distillation was entirely unknown to the ancients, nor can the general use of spirits in Europe be traced beyond the commencement of the last century, when it was exclusively brandy distilled from wine. But with consumers this refined salt of the earth had lost its savour, the more potent liquor was received approvingly, moderation was no longer inculcated, and the stomach once accustomed to an ardent stimulant, its progress was rapid,—the vice of drunkenness increasing as spirits became relatively cheaper than wine, and supplied to depraved palates a higher degree of fervour. From 1780 to 1859 the consumption of British-made spirits gradually advanced from 873,840 to 24,253,403 gallons, morals as well as health suffering by the augmented resort to the drop-pings of the still ; and it is a remarkable and startling

fact, that from spirituous and fermented drinks and their accessories the British treasury draws an annual revenue of upwards of nineteen millions sterling. The Vandal tribes of the far North were ever considered as hard drinkers, and all the chronicles respecting early Saxon banquets that have come down to us show them as much better supplied with tankards and other drinking gear than any thing of a more useful or substantial character. To King Edgar must be awarded the merit of first interposing a restraint on the immoderate potations then common, who directed the ordinary drinking jugs to be made with pins of metal fixed at equal intervals, so that none without disgrace might take more at a single draught than from one pin to another,—a measure, however, attended with but questionable success, since it is recorded by William of Malmesbury, in depicting the manners of the Anglo-Saxons, that “excessive drinking was the common vice of all ranks of the people, in which they spent whole nights without intermission.” Tacitus, too, in describing their dissolute habits, observes that “it was thought no disgrace among the ancient Germans to hang about all day and all night, carousing and drinking.” With ease and expanding means the jocund disposition of these early wassailers would seem to have revived anew, and the modern votary, in latent sympathy, is prone to cheer his duller hours with spontaneous snatches emulative of jollity and social good will :—

“And yet among my native shades, beside my nursing mother,
Where every stranger seems a friend, and every friend a brother,
I feel the old convivial glow unaided o’er me stealing,
The warm champagne, old-particular, brandy-punchy feeling.”

To diminish an acknowledged evil, if not altogether

to suppress a morbid craving for strong drink, incessant warfare has long been waged by a worthy and zealous section of the community; but whilst it must be freely admitted that they have awakened public conviction to the deadly effects and gross immorality attendant on the vice of habitual tippling, a partial fallacy is perceptible in some of their notions, and they have not succeeded in entirely banishing from the social code the occasional use of alcohol as a restorative or privileged indulgence. Efforts so earnest and laudable, and in the main so beneficial, attracted the notice and sympathy of the benevolent throughout Europe, and the voluntary researches and deductions of able scientific minds lent additional weight to the movement. Confirming the cherished theory of the advocates of total abstinence up to a certain point, their gravity was not a little disturbed on learning that the process of medical investigation, carrying them a step further, served clearly to constitute alcohol an active and serviceable element in the economy of alimentary life. Tea-totallers accustom themselves to denounce it as a rank *poison*,—to preach against it unceasingly as poisonous in large doses or in small, concentrated or diluted. Nevertheless, the dictates of sound physiology compel us to recognise and consider alcohol as *food*, and very efficient food too. “If it be not food,” remarks a skilful analyst, “then neither is sugar food, nor gluten, nor gelatine, nor any of those manifold substances employed by man which do not enter into the composition of his tissues. That it produces deleterious and even poisonous effects when concentrated and taken in large doses, is perfectly true; but that similar effects follow when *diluted*, and taken in moderation, is manifestly erroneous, as proved by daily experience.”

Concentrated alcohol has the effect, when swallowed, of depriving the mucous membrane of the stomach of all its water,—*i.e.* hardens it, and weakens its power of secretion ; whereas diluted alcohol does nothing of the kind, but *increases* the secretion by the stimulus given to the circulation. The singular fallacy of concluding that whatever is true of a large quantity of ardent spirit must be equally true, though in a lesser degree, of a small quantity of diluted alcohol, lies indeed at the basis of the total abstention doctrine ; but the enlightened physiologist knows that, in effect, the difference is great and absolute,—a difference in *kind*, and not simply one of degree. On the other hand, no one will seek to palliate the danger and mischief that surround a free indulgence in the use of alcohol. Terrible and insatiate is the goading influence of this “tricksy spirit,” and when conjoined with ignorance and sensuality, its effects are often fearfully intense. So glaring, indeed, are the evils of intemperance, so insidious and inimical to social virtue and welfare, that the generous motives of the advocates of temperance must be respected, even when resorting to exaggeration or a want of care and candour in dealing with special facts. They are warring against a hideous vice, but no object can be permanently served by seeking needlessly to elude or pervert the truth, and whatever temporary effect may arise from an iteration of the notion that alcohol is poison,—a poison equally in small quantities as in large,—always and every where poisonous,—the cause must suffer, because every day’s experience repudiates the supposition as unreal and untruthful. “It is necessary to remember,” remarks Dr. Brinton, in his work *On Food*, “how often alcohol constitutes, not the single feather

which distracts the sleepy savage, but the bed of down which restores the exhausted man. It may disturb a balance exquisitely adjusted ; and yet, in the main, counterpoise a scale heavily laden with disadvantages. If alcohol exhilarates, imparts comfort and energy, counteracts fatigue, hunger, and unrest, then it does in effect increase the capacity for work, and affords, in so far, a direct benefit and advantage. It is excess that is fatal, and the man who feels worse on the morrow of a social dinner which has been enlivened by a moderate quantity of wine, may thank himself, or his host, for a reaction which proves some error in either the quantity or quality of his computations. From good wine, in moderate quantity, there is no reaction whatever. That tea-totalism is compatible with health, it needs no elaborate facts to establish ; but if we take the customary life of those constituting the masses of our inhabitants of towns, we shall find reason to wait before we assume that this result will extend to our population at large. And in respect to experience, it is singular how few healthy tea-totallers are to be met with in our ordinary inhabitants of cities. Glancing back over the many years during which this question has been forced upon the author by his professional duties, he may estimate that he has sedulously examined not less than 50,000 to 70,000 persons, including many thousands in perfect health. Wishing, and even expecting to find it otherwise, he is obliged to confess that he has hitherto met with but very few perfectly healthy middle-aged persons successfully pursuing any arduous metropolitan calling under tea-total habits. On the other hand, he has known many total abstainers, whose apparently sound constitutions have given way with unusual and frightful

rapidity when attacked by casual sickness; and many more who, with the strongest resolution and inclination to abstain from alcohol, have been obliged to resume its moderate use from reasons no less valid and imperious than those which, eighteen hundred years ago, induced an inspired saint to prescribe it for a tee-total bishop.”*

Scientific research teaches us that alcohol *replaces* a given amount of ordinary food; that although forming none of the constituents proper of blood, it limits the combustion of those constituents, and in this way is equivalent to so much new blood. But the physiological action of alcohol taken inwardly is not yet satisfactorily explained. We know that it supplies the place of a certain quantity of *aliment*, but *how* it is assimilated we are not told. It is said to be “burnt” in the body, and to make its exit in the form of carbonic acid and water: in what way this esoteric process is accomplished remains to be ascertained. Doubtless, some of it escapes in the breath, and by some of the secretions; but how much is so absorbed, and what becomes of the remainder, if any, is at present a mystery. In practice, however, deficiency in one respect always seeks a proportionate compensation in another. Thus, in Temperance establishments, and in families where beer was withheld and money given in lieu, it was soon seen that the monthly consumption of bread was so materially increased, that the beer was twice paid for,—once in money, and a second time through the baker. So, on a very notable occasion,—the peace Congress at Frankfort, the members of which

* St. Paul, in his epistle to Timothy. “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake, and thine often infirmities.”—1 Tim., v. 23.

were for the most part tea-totallers,—an unusual inroad was daily made in certain dishes, especially farinaceous preparations, pastry, &c. The consumption was sufficiently in excess to attract the special notice of the experienced landlord, and his astonishment was not slight or agreeable at finding that his sober guests, at his expense, made up in pudding and sweets what they denied themselves in wine. Every one knows that a drunkard eats but little : in his case, the alcohol replaces for the time the deficiency of food, but he generally terminates his sottish career by losing his appetite altogether.

An inquiry into the influence of wine on national or individual character opens a wide and interesting field of disquisition ; but the absence of accurate data, and the difficulty of separating and distinguishing them from various attendant or special circumstances, would probably prevent the deduction of any consistent or satisfactory theory on the subject. Few reasonable persons will be disposed to doubt that, in a northern climate especially, a moderate quantity of pure wine acts beneficially on the constitution. In all ages of the world, in sacred as well as profane history, it is ever the abuse, and not the fair use of wine that has been condemned. It is sad to reflect how often undue indulgence has converted what is naturally generous and beneficent into an evil of no ordinary magnitude : so difficult is it to curb or prescribe the limit of rational enjoyment in the best of things. The practice, however, of drinking largely of wine has much decreased of late years, and it is gratifying to witness the gradual progress of society towards more refined and temperate habits. A generation has hardly passed away since it

was no uncommon thing to see men of high intellectual acquirements, and of irreproachable character in every other respect, protracting the nightly feast, till not only their cares but their senses were completely drowned in wine. At present such irrational excess would operate as an effectual barrier to all polite society. Some authors, it is true, have not hesitated to affirm that in wine-countries the character of the people is commonly analogous to the beverages they produce; but it must be acknowledged that the natives are much less prone to intemperance than those nations for whom the attraction of vinous liquors seems to increase in proportion as they recede from the climates that produce them. Although, when taken without restraint, wine can only be considered as "a delightful poison," as the Persians have appropriately termed it, yet, like other poisons, when used with moderation and discretion, it is capable of producing the most beneficial effects. "Temperately enjoyed," writes an eminent authority, "it acts as a cordial and stimulant,—quickenning the action of the heart, diffusing an agreeable warmth over the body, promoting the different secretions, communicating a sense of increased muscular force, exalting the nervous energy, and banishing all unpleasant feelings from the mind. In general, then, we may conclude that the good effects of wine as an article of diet are referrible to its stimulating operation on the nervous and muscular coats of the stomach, by which means that organ is incited to greater action, and the flow of gastric juice healthily promoted. This tendency will, of course, vary according to the proportion of the spirituous and aromatic constituents, and the quantities of the acids and neutral salts by which their

action, within certain limits, may be controlled or modified."

Hear another and still more recent commentator on this subject.* "That 'wine makes glad the heart of man,' not even the rules of modern exegesis will enable us to deny. And that, in quantities equally moderate as those to which this proportion must be virtually restricted, it so far substitutes and replaces food as to permit life and health to subsist for an apparently indefinite period on a food less rich or copious than would otherwise be requisite, is scarcely more questionable Red and white wine, such as kind Providence offers to the industry of civilized man, is found every where throughout a wide district, which ranges from the Atlantic on the west to Palestine on the east; not, perhaps, the costly products of extraordinary soil and high culture, but the sound, fresh, small wines grown along a line of latitude extending from Spain to Hungary, and which bid fair to resume the ground they have lost during the last century in England. . . . The arguments in defence of a system which had for many years rendered wine unknown to the mass of Englishmen would scarcely deserve to be raked up from the fitting obscurity they have now found, were it not that they strikingly illustrate that want of acquaintance with the facts and laws of human life which renders some of our most successful political controversialists perfectly unfit to legislate for the physical welfare of their fellow-citizens. To say that wine was an inferior or unwholesome drink in this climate; that the English workman would never drink

* Dr. William Brinton, in his *Treatise On Food and its Digestion*. 1861.

wine; that the foreign peasant would never grow it for him; that wine was a luxury, and therefore to be taxed to the verge of prohibition: — such were the assertions which, for years, those who should have been the instructors of the public substituted for more legitimate arguments in defence of our strange laws against one of the first necessities of civilized existence. Hardy predictions deserve no contradiction, until those who make them can show some claims to be considered prophets. But how men could call wine a luxury only, and appraise it on sophistical grounds which, carried to their logical conclusions, would entitle us to regard potatoes, water, and a single fig-leaf as the only necessities of human life, it is really difficult to understand. Certainly, the experience which teaches some persons that they can dispense with such aids to nutrition, or the still more doubtful considerations which league others in hostility against all alcoholic drinks, no way countervail either the general usefulness of wine, or its special value as a less poisonous and brutalizing agent than the ardent spirits which, in most countries of Europe, replace its insufficient consumption. It is, perhaps, the natural but multifarious admixture of ingredients in wine which makes this liquid so much less poisonous, and more medicinal, than dilute alcohol, — frequently amounting to a full dose in the quantity of wine often consumed daily by those who habitually drink it. The æthers and the tannic acid, as well as the tartaric acid and the tartrates of wine, are also doubtless of importance, and seem to confer upon it that rich and multifarious composition, by which this great medicine so far transcends all that we sometimes attempt in our pharmaceutical combinations of many

drugs, and securing that proper combination of stimulant, tonic, and alterative effects distinctive of the action of wine."

We find it further noted as "a remarkable and well-ascertained fact, that the alcohol in wine combined in the *natural way*, when drank in that state, is not productive of those complaints of the liver, gout, indigestion, and other diseases which arise from drinking the brandied wines of Portugal, in which the *spirit is adventitious*. The union of the alcohol, when mingled with the other ingredients of the wine by artificial means, is never perfect, and is beyond calculation more pernicious than the strongest natural product."*

To most persons of great mental activity there is commonly a tendency to an irritable condition of the nervous system, in which the smallest and most commonplace matter magnifies itself into undue importance, becomes a worry and a care, and genuine repose and tranquillity are banished by an access of perturbations of feeling almost beyond the capacity of the sufferer to restrain. "The proverbs of all tongues," remarks Dr. Chambers, "show how work purely mental exhausts the body; how, for instance, not only the painful emotions, care, sorrow, anxiety, but the nobler impulses,—the afflatus of the poet, the ambition of the patriot, the fixed attention of the scholar, the abstraction of the lover, fret to dust their tenement of clay." Now it is consoling to reflect that there exists a power capable of relieving this morbid condition, and of keeping in check the tendency to all such disturbing


* *Memoranda of a Tour in Central France*, by J. H. Holdsworth, M.D.

sensations. Universal experience teaches us that wine, tea, tobacco, and alcohol, used moderately, alike exert a potent *calmative* influence on these oppressive irritabilities,—an influence which seems precisely in harmony with the teachings of science in regard to their physiological action; and it rests with each individual to choose which is most suitable to himself, provided that he has self-command enough to keep within the bounds which sound judgment prescribes. “Wine, considered within these limits,” observes Dr. Sandford, in his *Remarks on the Medicinal effects of Wine and Spirits*, “is undoubtedly one of those real blessings with which a kind Providence has favoured us; and its true uses and effects have been long known and considered by medical writers of very high eminence and authority. The power of making ‘glad the heart of man’ must therefore, by every person of discernment and observation, be allowed to have been justly ascribed to it by David, and within the limits prescribed I would urge its use to be strictly confined.”



SECTION V.

Of the Wines of Portugal.

ORTUGAL has been described as rejoicing in a climate "so salubrious and weather so mild, an atmosphere so buoyant, owing to the gentle breezes from the sea and the pure air on shore, and a people so long-lived, so healthy, and so robust, that sickness is hardly known, and many live to the age of ninety years or more." Even the exposed and mountainous districts are fertile, and produce every kind of delicious fruit in perfection; also oil, wine, and honey in profusion. "Not even the pears of Calabria," says one of her encomiastic sons, "the plums of Damascus, the figs of Campania, the grapes of Caieta, the apples of Maucianus, the pomegranates of Phoenicia, the peaches of Persia, or the melons of Hostia, excel in flavour and size the orchard-fruits of the land in which Pomona, adored by the antients, has fixed her abode." But although Nature may have thus prodigally showered such inestimable bounties on this favoured clime, the hand of man has done little to utilize or perpetuate them. Portugal, once so renowned, is no longer the Lusitania of yore, and her untilled plains, the poverty and squalor of the people, the apathy of proprietors and rulers, bear silent witness to the choice of a heedless and retrogressive course. Her once noble halls and palaces, her convents and wealthy monasteries, savour but of one general loneliness and decay; whilst the

almost entire absence of convenient roads, and every ordinary facility for local interchange, goes far to neutralize all her other special benefits.

Portugal, as well from its geographical position and geological conformation as from other propitious circumstances, appears to have been destined for the developement and perfection of the vine. This natural superiority, however, has been sadly marred by the indolence and ignorance of the cultivators, for the produce might have been vastly increased and still more improved, and ordinary wines have acquired a better character, if the farmers, obeying certain fixed and well-known laws, had studied the mode of tillage most suitable for the soil and the peculiar requirements of the plant, and adopted a skilful method of fabricating the wine. In many provinces of Portugal the vine is planted indiscriminately on hill and plain, and allowed to shoot up to a considerable height. No less than sixty-seven varieties of vine are reckoned as grown in that country, but a baneful practice prevails of mingling the fruit without distinction of colour or quality, which is fatal alike to personal emulation and any advance towards perfection of produce. "Every where throughout the country," says a native author, "a blind and uncertain practice is followed: every body is the slave of custom: there is no fixed principle to direct or guide their operations." *Custom* is a ready answer for every thing, and bad wine in many districts is made from good grapes without thought or reflection, or leaving any possibility of convincing the vintagers that much better liquor might be produced with far less trouble. The farmers do as did their forefathers before them, disdaining the counsels of scientific men, censuring those

who recommend timely innovations, and more especially rejecting the suggestions of such as were most likely to be beneficial to them. In the immediate vicinity of Lisbon, however, and along the course of the Douro, the culture of the plant is better understood, and more care and method are bestowed on the vintages. The vines here are in general kept low, and trained on poles; at Beira the high growth prevails, and there, as elsewhere, they mingle brandy with the wines.

“Port” wine is a production of the province of Traz os Montes (*behind the mountains*), on the north bank of the Douro. The scenery of this wine-country is far from picturesque. The landscape simply consists of a series of high hills, covered with vines from base to summit, every where treeless, except for some stray elder clumps, and a few olives here and there; but olive-trees, though sad of countenance, are substantial friends of man, and do not offer him eye-service only. The ground on the hills is a loose granite, with a very thin covering of soil, and it is cut into gigantic flights of steps, on which the vines are planted. These grow in bushes three or four feet high, about a yard apart.

The first care of the wine-farmer, when his harvest-time approaches, is to engage men and women enough for the vintage work. The labourers employed are almost savages, wild in their tempers, dirty in their persons, and every male of them, man or boy, goes armed, after the common custom, with an ugly gun slung to his back. The day's food of these poor people is of small moment. They think themselves well off if they can get a couple of dried sardines for dinner, as a relish to their piece of Indian-corn bread. The duty of the women in the vineyard is to cut the bunches into

large baskets, which the men carry on their shoulders to the press. A great deal of singing accompanies and lightens the toil, and all seem to work very contentedly, in spite of the oppressive heat. When darkness terminates the labour of the day, the peasants assemble outside the farm-house, a guitar is produced, and dancing and merriment are well sustained for some hours.

When all the grapes are in the wine-press, the first thing to be done is to turn them well over with wooden rakes, in order to separate them from the stalks. Then all the men tuck up their trousers and jump in. The scene inside becomes very animated. 'Twenty or thirty brown-faced and black-bearded tatterdemalions, up to their knees in the purple juice, sing, quarrel, dance, and scream, half mad with excitement, for to them it is the crowning event of the year. Every now and then a cry is raised for *aguardiente*, which the farmer furnishes. It is the pure white spirit as it came from the still, and very strong. As its influence begins to be felt the singing gets louder, the dancing, which within the press is the requisite work, "grows fast and furious," and a general fight often ensues, in which the long guns sometimes play a dangerous part. When all the juice is trodden from the grapes, a plug is drawn, and the must runs through into a smaller tank, whence it is carried in pails to the vats, containing four or five tuns each, and there left to ferment.

When the fermentation in the vat is complete, the product would not suit the English conventional palate, being thin, and tart and astringent. It has therefore to be sweetened and fortified. For sweetening *geropiga* is employed. This latter is made by the addition of brandy to a portion of fresh must, which being thus pre-

vented from fermenting, retains all the sugar contained in the grape. Brandy is further used to strengthen the wine. Frequently, too, there is deficiency of colour, and this defect is cured by putting dried elder-berries, tied in a sack, into a tub about half full of wine. Into this tub a man is placed, who by treading on the sack quickly expresses the colour from the berries, and the darkened liquor is added to the rest. This practice is common throughout the vine districts, and favourable spots are set apart for plantations of elder-bushes solely to supply this demand for the fruit. When the wine has been sufficiently stored, it is racked from the tun into pipes, carried down by ox-carts to the river Douro, fastened to a barge, and floated to Oporto. There it is warehoused till the time comes for shipping it to England, whither by far the greater part of the exports is sent. The superior quality alone can be legally consigned to any part of Europe. Official examiners appointed by the government go round ostensibly to test the wine, and put their brand on the pipes they approve. Without their mark no cask is allowed to pass the custom-house.

The vine is extensively cultivated in every province, but it is from the plantations of the Cima do Douro alone that its wines have derived their high celebrity in England. This fertile district, better known as the Alto or Upper Douro, was formerly under the sole jurisdiction of a chartered company, invested with power to determine the qualities and fix the prices for the whole vintage. The produce was usually divided into two principal classes; viz., Factory wines, and a branch or secondary kind, called *Ramo*, the purchase and sale of which was for a long time confined to the privileged

company. Although the general aspect of the country is bleak and unattractive, it presents a succession of hills that afford the choicest exposures, and such loose and friable soils as have been shown to be most suitable to the growth of the vine,—the powerful sun of the south rendering a failure of the crop a matter of rarity. The harvest, consequently, is usually luxuriant, the grape rich and abundant. Soil, climate, and fertility, however, were alike lost upon the sloth, ignorance, and superstition through successive generations of a hard-faring and untractable people. Wine in large quantities was made in a very defective manner, but it satisfied the wants of the home consumer, and this being the main object of the proprietor, he became careless of improvement. Produce of an unnecessarily inferior character was the inevitable result, and the wines of Oporto seemed destined long to remain unnoticed.

But external events were effecting for Portugal what Portugal was unwilling or incapable of doing for itself. A jealous rivalry and national animosity had long dominated the councils of England and France, which gradually increasing in asperity, they began to oppress each other's industry by fiscal regulations and prohibitions, that finally led to open hostilities. The sympathy and support uniformly accorded to the Stuart family by the court of Versailles, and the intrigues of Louis XIV. in Spain, further contributed to induce the British government to cultivate a closer amity with Portugal, and one important political result was the Methuen commercial treaty of 1703. By the provisions of this celebrated compact the Portugal wines, in return for a preference granted on the import of our woollens, were to be admitted for home consumption at a customs duty one

third less than that assessed on the vintage of any other country. The impolicy of such a measure will not now be denied. Its progressive tendency was, to check the introduction of cheaper if not better wines; to promote the importation of supplies under the name of Port from places other than Oporto; to stimulate the practice of admixture and adulteration both at home and abroad; and finally to erect for itself a giant monopoly, fraught with baneful and suicidal results, prejudicial alike to quality, purity, and price,—the exports of later years, by their inferior character, serving to throw additional discredit upon all shipments bearing the name of Port.

Since this diplomatic arrangement, the political relations of England and Portugal have rendered us extremely familiar with the wines of that country, and obtained for them a degree of favour and importance which, under other circumstances, they might not have so easily acquired. Prior to the revolution of 1688 the wines of French origin constituted three-fifths of the entire consumption of this country, the imports extending at times to 40,000 pipes per annum. In 1675 there came to England 14,990 pipes of French wines to 40 of those of Portugal; and in the year following no less than 19,290 French to 166 Portuguese. Soon afterwards, the growths of France were altogether prohibited, and in seven years,—from 1679 to 1685,—only eight pipes were imported, whilst 13,760 pipes of Portuguese came in. From 1686 to 1695 the interdict on France was removed, when the average annual imports again expanded to 26,892 pipes,—Portugal wines not reaching to 900 pipes. But the national taste in wine soon began to be influenced by price, and

fluctuated as the growth available was dear or cheap. From this remarkable era these large French consignments began rapidly to decline: in 1701 they fell to 4000 pipes, and at the end of the first seven years from the Methuen compact, the average annual supply was 330 pipes only. As few persons in those days kept much store of wine in private cellars, the chief consumption being in taverns, where it was served from the cask, the whole quantity in the country at any one time was not very considerable, and the stock soon became completely exhausted. As the growths of the Bordelais, however, still continued much in favour and request, an appropriate substitute for them became a pressing necessity, when the deficiency was supplied by the red wine of Portugal, and the commencement of the Oporto trade dates from about this period. National taste and habits were not overcome without a hearty struggle, and the novel imports were received at first with undisguised scorn and reluctance. This is daintily illustrated in the *Farewell to Wine*, temp. 1693, by the following tavern dialogue:—

“Some Claret, boy!”

“Indeed, sir, we have none.

Claret, sir? Lord! there’s not a drop in town.
But we have the best red Port.”

“What’s that you call

Red Port?”

“A wine, sir, comes from Portugal.

I’ll fetch a pint, sir.” * * *

“Ah! how it smells! Methinks a real pain
Is by its odour thrown upon my brain.
I’ve tasted it: ’tis spiritless and flat,
And has as many different tastes,
As can be found in compound pastes.”

The poet Prior, too, condescends to indulge in an occasional fling at the intrusive beverage, as may be seen in the following couplets from his *Alma* :

“And in a cottage or a court,
Drink fine Champagne or *muddled Port*.”

“Else (dismal thought!) our warlike men
Might drink *thick Port* for fine Champagne.”

Again, in his *Cameleon*, we read,—

“Or if it be his fate to meet
With folks who have more wealth than wit,
He loves *cheap Port* and double bub,
And settles in the Humdrum club.”

Whilst Shenstone, in his well-known verses “written at a tavern in Henley,” aims a sportive shaft at the same bespattered butt when he writes —

“And every health which I begin
Converts *dull Port* to bright Champagne,—
Such freedom crown’d it at an inn.”

The national prejudice appears to have preserved a lingering vitality to the close of the century, when the expiring lion, still defiant, received a parting kick from the mock Duke, in Mr. Townley’s happy burlesque of *High Life below Stairs*. Says Philip the butler,—

“Here is Claret, Burgundy, and Champagne; and a bottle of Tokay for the ladies: there are tickets on every bottle. But if any gentleman chooses Port—

Duke. Port? ‘Tis only fit for a dram.”

Port, on its first introduction here, was a much lighter wine than it afterwards became; neither was it at the outset the growth of the Douro, or even shipped at Oporto. A product of the Minho district, it rather resembled Claret or Burgundy, and was exported from the harbour of Vianna. The popular taste was slow in conforming itself to the exigencies of legislation, and

some time elapsed before the wines of France were entirely supplanted. At the period of the Methuen diplomacy the consumption of Portugal wine hardly exceeded 5,924 tuns, which, notwithstanding the increase of population and augmented fiscal burthens on other growths, was not doubled till 1770,—an interval of 67 years. The differential duties, however, in favour of Portugal were potential in their way, and the early preference of French produce was gradually undermined. By 1720, this treaty arrangement had conferred an advantage on our new ally over the produce of other states equivalent to £24 per pipe; and thus compelled, in a manner, to resort to the banks of the Douro, there is little need to seek for other reasons why Port became the British standard of vinous merit; whilst the fact certainly demonstrates how much may be done by treaties and taxation in modelling the inclinations and practice of the nation at large. It was not its superior quality or intrinsic worth that first brought this vintage into note, but because it was comparatively low in price. Englishmen, however, are strongly wedded to old habits: the majority still believe Port to be the only real wine in the world, and shiver whenever Hock or Claret is named. The people have long been trained and habituated to its use, have become seasoned to its fervour, and it is not likely to be deposed from its supremacy for some generations to come. The augmented consumption of Oporto wine in more recent times, as shown by a comparison of the imports in the first ten years of the last century with the first ten years of the present, is remarkable:

		tuns	hhd.	gals.
Imports from 1700 to 1710 .	.	81,293	0	9
Ditto „ 1800 „ 1810 .	.	222,022	2	52

the excess in favour of the latter period being equivalent to 281,659 pipes.

Prior to the year 1715, the Portuguese were considered to be ignorant of the art of preparing wines for exportation. When first brought into this country their produce was sent in a pure state; but about this time the custom commenced of mingling brandy with the shipments intended for English use, and to such an extent was this carried, that in later exports no less than from 16 to 18 gallons of spirit per pipe were infused, and that often of execrable quality. A full proportion of alcohol exists naturally in all southern produce, and consequently in that of Oporto as well. What is further added to wines, innately of so much strength, must be injurious in some degree, and can never, like the spontaneously evolved spirit, freely assimilate with the bulk even during fermentation; for it is certain that the mucilage and undecomposed sugar left unabsorbed will always have a tendency to excite a renewal of the fermentative action. The admixture of brandy, however, continued to prevail, notwithstanding the early censure and remonstrance directed against the objectionable custom. Thus we see, by a letter addressed to their agents in the Alto Douro so far back as 1754, the English factors complain that "the grower, at the time of the vintage, is in the habit of checking the fermentation of the wines too soon, by putting brandy into them whilst fermenting; a practice," they emphatically remark, "which must be considered as *diabolical*; for after this the wines will not remain quiet, but are continually tending to ferment, and to become ropy and acid." The agents, in reply, assert that "the English merchants knew that the first-rate

wine of the Factory had become excellent; but they wished it to exceed the limits which nature had assigned to it, and that when drunk, it should feel like liquid fire in the stomach; that it should burn like inflamed gunpowder; that it should have the tint of ink; that it should be like the sugar of Brazil in sweetness, and like the spices of India in aromatic flavour. They began by recommending, by way of secret, that it was proper to dash it with brandy in the fermentation to give it strength, and with elderberries, or the rind of the grape, to give it colour; and as the persons who used the prescription found the wine increase in price, and the English merchants still complaining of a want of strength, colour, and maturity in the article supplied, the recipe was propagated till the wine became a mere confusion of mixtures." Though the picture here drawn may be thought somewhat exaggerated, it conveys, it is to be feared, too just a representation of English notions and taste in Port wines. By a process so objectionable a considerable additional outlay is incurred, and the prime cost doubled or trebled to those who can afford the luxury of reducing such wines, in some twenty years, to the state to which they would probably have been brought earlier by a diligent application of the recognised principles of fermentation and storeage.

When the young wine arrives in this country, it is of a very dark purple colour, a full rough body, with a kind of bitter-sweet taste, and a dominant odour of *aguardiente*. After it has remained some years in the wood, the acerbities of the flavour abate; but it is only when it has been further kept several years in bottle that the force of the brandy is completely subdued, and

the genuine character of the wine developed. During the process of melioration, a considerable portion of the extractive matter is precipitated on the sides of the vessels in the form of crust, and when this progresses too rapidly, or in any great excess, the wine loses colour, becomes pale or tawny, and parts with a portion of its flavour and aroma. In some instances this change occurs much earlier than in others, especially with the tinted produce of the white grape, and it is always to be hastened by a further admixture of brandy. Whether the addition of ardent spirit was originally made with the view of enabling the wines to bear sea-carriage, or merely to pander to a supposed defective or depraved palate, is of little importance to determine. In this country, however, it has become a recognised maxim, not only that the quality is much improved by the infusion, but that they will not even keep any length of time without it. Prolonged observation and experience certainly tend to favour the prevailing opinion, that an addition of spirit is essential to develop the higher properties of Portuguese wines; and this view will be strengthened not a little by the recent investigations conducted by Mr. Charles Bernard, government Commissioner of the wine inquest for Portugal, who in his official report* tells us, that "It is the invariable practice in the Alto Douro, with the best wines, to add spirit to the must, to check fermentation, and insure its retaining its sweetness. Only second-class wines are allowed to remain any time without spirit, and when such is the case, the wine is generally rough and harsh. . . . I understand that the best and strongest natural wines require the greatest amount of extraneous

* *Parliamentary Return*, April 1862.

spirit (say 20 per cent.) to keep them in a sound and improving condition. . . . The national taste of England has changed, and may do so again in favour of the more simple and pure wines, when probably the growers of Spain and Portugal may find a corresponding and successful mode of treatment for their wines to meet the altered public taste. I cannot, however, set my own experience in these matters too positively against the general opinion of those most deeply interested in the true appreciation of their staple produce; and the entire sum of my information received while among them is unmistakeably in favour of the extensive use of distilled spirit, to strengthen, purify, and keep the wines they make."

Towards the middle of the last century, however, the admixtures and adulterations commonly practised had become so glaring and universal, as to cause a serious diminution in the demand, and so low had prices fallen that in 1752-3 a pipe of the then Oporto wine was to be bought at the place of shipment for 2*l.* 16*s.* The failures and distress naturally attendant on a sudden revulsion and stagnation of trade were severely felt, and under the influence of public clamour and discontent the Government was induced to authorize the formation of a national joint-stock company for the superintendence and protection of the culture and future commerce of their staple product. In 1756 the exclusive management of the Upper Douro was granted to the Oporto Wine Company, the regulations and powers of their charter being ample for the suppression of the pernicious practices common both in cultivation and treatment. Had the company done its duty, and eradicated the evils so long and notoriously

prevalent, the wine of Oporto, naturally of a high character, would have further improved; but if the manner in which it exercised the authority delegated to it be looked into, we shall find it not only grossly betraying its trust, but exhibiting all the odious features of a rigid and grinding monopoly; and so baneful and continuous have been the abuses of their privilege, as repeatedly to call forth the censures of the ablest writers of their own country. The narrow and mercenary system they pursued has borne its natural fruit in high prices, low quality, and short supplies. The abundance on the banks of the Douro, and the capabilities of the country for unlimited extension, were unquestionable; yet by arbitrary restrictions, and, notwithstanding the triple advantage of a ready and exclusive market, exceptional duties, and an increasing population both in wealth and numbers, the imports here were actually less in the five years 1818-22, than for a corresponding term so far back as 1731. At that period, too, the cost was under £8 per pipe; in 1818 the price at Oporto was £48, with no certainty even then that the wine retained either its certified quality or most perfect state.

It was not an active and increasing demand from satisfied consumers, but the crafty mercantile management, that caused this excessive increase of price. Sir Edward Barry remarked, in his treatise on modern wines, that the Port wines of his time, 1775, were got much heavier and more heating than formerly, and took much longer time to mature; and since the Methuen treaty has in a manner compelled us to drink them, we may justly complain that, through the impolitic conduct of this company, we have not only had to purchase their

wine at an enhanced cost, but have not even been allowed to obtain it in its best and purest form. The effects of more recent legislation will doubtless rectify the evils inflicted by an unwise and grasping policy, and the interests of the general community be thereby permanently advanced. It is evident that heretofore justice has not been done to the wines of the Douro, nor have their true character been fairly developed. Let the cultivators be free, let care and delicacy be observed in the preparation of the vintages, and there need be no fear of a prosperous result.

The correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the British Consul at Oporto, October 1850, supplies much curious and interesting information connected with this long-standing grievance, and from so reliable a source we transfer the following particulars, derived from statements remarkable for their intelligence and lucidity. Referring to the system which then prevailed in the conduct of the wine-trade, he bears testimony to the fact that highly objectionable regulations were officially sanctioned by the Portuguese Executive to enhance the cost of the Douro wines to the English consumer, without any adequate measures for preventing "the exportation to Great Britain of any but the best quality," — all kinds of wine, of the first, second, or third class, being, in fact, constantly shipped to this country as freely as to any other part of the world. A decree of the 29th of May, 1850, ordered that the duty on all vintages of the "first quality," to whatever country exported, shall be the same; but wine of the "second quality" may still be sent to places out of Europe as before. Now, writes the Consul, on Port wines of the "second quality" the

export duty is only sixpence a-pipe; but wine for any place in Europe must be nominally of the "first quality," and on such the export duty is £3 9s. 7d. per pipe. In both cases it is requisite that it should be accompanied from the stores to its shipment by an official certificate, granted for wine of the quality the exporter states it to be; but whether it is identical with that for which the certificate was obtained, or even wine of the same kind, no inspector or authority at any time inquires. For such as are intended for consignment to an European port, if not placed in the first class by the official tasters, passes must be purchased. These are procurable only from holders of wine nominally of the "first quality," but unsaleable as such, and for which sometimes as much as £5 a-pipe is exacted. The English merchant, therefore, has to pay £8 or £9 per pipe more than the very same wine would cost a New York or Brazilian shipper,—a most important difference, especially when the wines are new, or low in price. The amount of export duty raised on first-quality wine is about £84,000 a-year, more than nine-tenths being contributed by the English importer; of which the Oporto Wine Company receives annually £34,300, in consideration of its obligation to purchase yearly from the farmers a certain quantity of wines of the second and third qualities, none of which, under either denomination, can be exported to England. These fiscal regulations, although ostensibly so intended, are not conducive to the benefit of trade, as testified by the Commercial Association of Oporto, who, when consulted by the Portuguese government, described "the practice as barbarous; that wines of the second class were as good as those of the first class; and that the

denominations 'second and third quality' were a gross deception, and injurious alike to the farmer and the merchant." The effect has been an artificial scarcity of wine exportable to England, and therefore an undue enhancement of the market value, without sustaining the cultivator or benefiting the consumer.

The character and classification of the several wines is determined by public officers, twelve in number, appointed for that duty. In conformity with the law, the trials of wine last seven hours a-day; and for no less than six hours at a time these diligent employés are occupied in tasting wine of every description produced in the district under survey. Sweet wine and dry, with or without brandy, light, full, pure, or mixed with colouring or sweetening matter, are all tasted by them promiscuously, each officer deciding on seldom less than 150, and sometimes even as many as 300 samples in the six hours. Under so delusive an examination it would be impossible, if the wines were to be classed according to their purity, soundness, and fine flavour, for the decision of the tasters to be right except by accident. What would be most likely to attract their approval would be such as were extremely full and fervent, whilst the light, and more delicate, and finely flavoured wines would probably be rated low, or rejected altogether. Some time after the trial, the Government determines for how much of the "first quality" certificates shall be issued to qualify it for exportation as such,—all the remainder being ranked as wine of the "second quality." This decision, however, seems to depend more upon the representation of the company as to the quantity in stock at Oporto, than on the goodness or abundance of the vintage.

The maker of inferior kinds, remarks the Consul in conclusion, must profit largely by regulations which encourage, if they do not compel, the owners of good vineyards to infuse brandy and colouring matter. That the wines of the Upper Douro, if well fermented and carefully made, need more than a very small addition of ardent spirit is exceedingly doubtful. Certainly, good wines sent to the Brazils keep, notwithstanding the length of the voyage and the high temperature to which they are exposed, with about half as much spirit as those meant for England, and it is probable that even a considerable portion of this reduced quantity is unnecessary. To provide the brandy used in the wines imported yearly into England, more than 30,000 pipes of wine are distilled; and on this brandy, if charged as spirits, the duty would amount to not less than £400,000 a-year. Doubtless, it is highly advantageous for Portugal to be able to send so large a quantity of her produce to this country, but it is not a little surprising that any artificial regulations should be permitted, which, without conceding the British importers any privilege or equivalent, burthen their wines with duties on exportation amounting to more than £78,000 per annum, and yet further charges, in benefit of petty interests, for produce that does not find its way to this country at all, equal to £50,000 a-year more,—to say nothing of the arbitrary restrictions on quantity, enforced with a view to the enhancement of price. The royal decree of May 1850 does not place British and American traders on an equal footing,—wines of the first quality and a very large portion ranked in the second class differing only in name. All that it accomplishes is, to enable exporters to ship for

places out of Europe wine certified of the first quality on payment of the high export duty, or as wine but of second quality, paying only sixpence a-pipe, as they may think fit.*

Such were some of the abuses arising from baneful regulations and inane supervision, intended for the gain of the few at the expense of the many, which called loudly for inquiry and rectification through the potent influence of the advanced intelligence and enlightened commercial policy of later times. Narrow restrictions, pernicious monopoly and extortion, were permitted to trammel the vine cultivation of the Alto Douro, conducive only of artificial quality, artificial scarcity, and factitious prices for the British market. These evils will no longer be tolerated. The enlarged views of the English government with respect to its fiscal imposts on wine, will re-act with considerable stringency on its commercial relations with Portugal. The prosperity of that country depends on her vintages, and liberal measures for greater freedom of mercantile intercourse have already been propounded in her legislature. The Douro yields wines of superior excellence, whilst the produce of the provinces of Traz os Montes, Beira, and Minho, hitherto confined to local use, can compete with the lighter vintages of France; and the time, probably, is not far distant when the Portuguese wine-trade will be vastly and profitably amplified.

The chief white sorts known to us are the Lisbon,


* By a decree of 11th October, 1852, the Portuguese government equalized their export duties on Port wine to all the world, by a reduction of two-thirds of the original tax on all shipments from Oporto to ports in Europe; but as the distinction of qualities was suffered to remain unchanged, bilhettes or permits retain their former obstructive position and market value.

a useful sweet wine, possessing considerable body; Bucellas, a well-known table variety, the produce of the Hock grape transplanted to Lisbon; Termo, a light refreshing wine, grown near the mouth of the Douro; and Carcavellos, known also as Calcavella, a sweet wine of a delicious muscatel flavour, grown in the same vicinity. Setuval, in Estremadura, also produces a white muscadine of good esteem. Lisbon and the adjoining territories supply red kinds of excellent quality, and in great abundance. There is, also, a light vintage called Colares Port, which, when pure, contains some peculiar and valuable properties, and is often prescribed in cases of deficient stamina. The growths of Lamego, Torres Vedras, and Monção, the latter of high local celebrity, are described as sufficient for the supply of a kingdom.

The grape-blight first made its appearance on the Portuguese vines in 1853, and appears to have reached its climax in 1856-7. The effects of the distemper in this region were deplorable: hardly any of the white varieties escaped, and a serious blow was struck at the national prosperity. It annihilated the most choice and expensive Portugal wine, reduced the annual crop to one quarter of an average, and impaired the character of the remnant,—lessening the value of the exports and its reputation in the chief markets, a current deterioration of quality and enhancement of price which will take some time to repair. The failure of the vine crop was the most disastrous event that could happen to the wine-farmers of that country, as they depend for existence on their grapes, much of the soil being too poor for other culture.

SECTION VI.

The Wines of Spain.

LESSED with a benignant climate, the richest vintages, and abundant produce, this kingdom has long held a distinguished place among the chief vine-bearing territories of repute, and the growths of the Iberian peninsula rank deservedly high in the estimation of leading connoisseurs, not only in England, but all over the world. If France lays claim to the first honours in this respect, it is because science has led the way to eminence, and yielded to delicate manipulation that which Nature had well nigh accorded to Spain without such appliances. With every disadvantage of the indolent and injudicious process in manufacture there pursued, its vintages are very bounteous and of surpassing excellence. Of the red class, perhaps the Spaniards can hardly boast of many that can rival the more delicate growths and perfect bouquet of other localities; but in the production of dry white, and certain kinds of sweet wine, they stand unequalled, and the trade in them extends to every part of the globe.

In estimating the general character of the wines of any country, considerable allowance must be made, not only for the prevailing habits and taste of the natives, but for the peculiar disadvantages in respect of internal commerce and carriage under which they may be placed. The Spaniard, when he drinks wine as an indulgence, gives the preference to those which are rich and sweet. Hence he esteems the growths of Malaga, Alicant, and

Fuencaral more highly than those of Xeres, which, unquestionably, are the most perfect, and generally most valued by other nations. The great abundance, too, which commonly prevails, makes him careless of securing a particular supply; or if he were disposed to take any pains about it, the difficulties of transit and imperfect means of storeage would be sufficient to prevent or neutralize the incipient wish. Bottles and casks are rarely met with, and subterraneous wine-cellars, except in the monasteries and large commercial towns, are almost unknown. Under such circumstances it can be matter of little surprise that the ordinary Spanish wines should fall so much below the excellence that might be looked for from the many natural advantages they possess,—an evil, however, of easy and perhaps early remedy through an ameliorated social condition. “The mountains round Granada,” remarks Mr. Jacob, “are well calculated for vines, but so little attention is paid to the cultivation of them, that the wine produced is very bad. Yet we had the best proof that good wine is made here in some which a gentleman sent us from his cellar: it was equal to any Burgundy I have ever tasted, and of the same colour, without any taint of the skin,” so common in this country. Some of the better kinds of Spanish growth are thought to resemble in quality those of Roussillon and Languedoc: they excel them in strength and spirituousness, in fulness of body and great durability. The peculiar flavour appertaining to the former are partly referrible to the processes employed in their manufacture; for, in preparing the sweet kinds the must is often boiled, while, for the dry white wines, the grapes are sprinkled with gypsum before they are trodden or submitted to the

action of the press. By such operations the saccharine matter becomes concentrated, and the proportion of alcohol is increased; but the aroma is deadened if not destroyed, and the produce thus obtained is deficient in the delicate odour that distinguishes the finest class of French origin.

The wines of Spain are grown on a soil highly congenial to the culture of the vine, for the most part calcareous, of which carbonate of lime forms two-thirds, and often three-fourths. The sun ripens the grape without those hazards from chill and humidity to which, in a more northern clime, the vintage is constantly liable. Hence the crop rarely fails, though in the southern parts of the kingdom the summer heat is so intense, that they are obliged to frequently irrigate the vines. From north to south, sites, soils, and aspects of the happiest kind cover the face of the country. The vineyards are principally on slopes and declivities, and the grapes are left to hang until they begin to shrivel in the sun. For making Sherry, red and white grapes are used indiscriminately: pale, amber, and brown are equally the product of the same kind of fruit, varied by differing modes of treatment. The finer wines are mostly of a straw colour, which deepens with age to golden; such as bear a darker shade contain a portion of concentrated brown wine, which supplies the place of alcohol. Colour, however, is not a reliable criterion, as the lowest qualities exported are generally pale wines, rendered ardent by a free admixture of brandy. The best Sherries have nothing added but wine of equal quality, which is done periodically by the merchants, who maintain the character of their stock by annually replenishing the tuns.

The best white wines are grown in the southern districts of St. Lucar and Xeres de la Frontera, in the province of Seville. Their manufacture is conducted by the agents or principals of foreign houses, who reside in the locality, and to this may be attributed the main cause of the marked improvement of later years. The high prices demanded for Sherries designated as *vino fino* will hardly be thought unreasonable, when the care and attention given to the growth, together with the various local and fiscal charges, are taken into the account. The wines of Montillà, in the adjoining province of Cordova, are also justly celebrated: they rank among the stoutest produce of Spain, and are highly prized for their qualities of body, excellence, and purity. One of the driest species of Sherry is Amontillado, for the manufacture of which the fruit is gathered two or three weeks earlier than for other sorts. The peculiar characteristics that mark this wine seem to be capricious in their origin, or but imperfectly understood. It cannot be produced as a natural matter of course, or reckoned upon with any promise of certainty, inasmuch as out of fifty butts made at the same vineyard, under the same circumstances, and with the same species of grape, probably only two or three will turn out to be wine of this specific character. No reason whatever can be given for its assuming the properties essential to the vintages of Montillà, from which it derives its name; and as the quantity made is necessarily very limited, it commands a proportionately higher price than other kinds. Its flavour is delicate, and so sensitive, that it will bear no foreign admixture of any description, and the least addition of brandy would entirely spoil it. The Soleras, so called, are the

fine old mother wines, which by age, care, and attention have acquired both fulness of body and concentrated aroma: they are much in use for toning and improving other growths. The white and the sweet varieties are those chiefly known to foreigners; but the red wines of the interior, properly managed, would prove equal if not superior to most others, both in quality and agreeable character. The *vins du pays* consumed by the natives are not the white rich sorts, nor the dry Xeres, but very excellent red wines, though they are too often deteriorated by the carelessness observed in their fabrication. Those raised far from the coast are generally kept in skins, as being easier both for store and carriage. From this cause they are often so tainted with the pitchy taste and the odour of the undressed hide, as to be hardly drinkable by a foreigner at all. The inland growths, however, are stout, and of an agreeable flavour, and when the political and social condition of the country shall have changed for the better, and the means and facility of transit enlarged, it will be seen that Spain, with her sunny climate, fertile soil, and improving process, can furnish vintages that will excel the produce of most other countries.

The chief characteristics of Spanish wines are strength, aroma, and durability, and the vine is cultivated throughout the peninsula. In Catalonia, where the land is propitious, the plains are carefully nurtured, and the highest spots accessible are planted with vines. Such is the fondness and industry of the people for this branch of husbandry, that wherever there is a break in the cliff with a few feet of surface,—a mere ledge to which there is no other mode of access than being let down with a rope, even there the vine is

raised. The wines of this province are substantial, rich, spirituous, and abundant, some thousand pipes of which are annually shipped to England, where it is much in use for blending with others of less strength. The country round Tarragona is almost wholly covered with vineyards, and notwithstanding a pernicious system of negligent manufacture, the wines here are of a very tolerable quality. Mataro, also, has some productive vines, but the same careless management prevailing, the natural qualities are greatly impaired. The vicinity of Figueras is diligently cultivated, even to the base of the Pyrenees; but this vintage is known more for its strength than fine flavour. The wine of the Priory, which is reckoned the best of all the Catalonian growths, is produced on hills of loose argillaceous schist. Many of the vineyards of Arragon are planted in the same kind of soil, and chiefly with red grapes, which yield an excellent *vino tinto*. The produce of this province is very considerable, possessing both strength and flavour, the best of which is made at Vittoria. The wine-districts of Old Castile are equally prolific. At Manzanares, situate in the province of La Mancha, the much-esteemed Val de Peñas is made. This is a red wine, grown on rocky or stony ground, whence its name of *valley of stones*. The Castilians rate it very highly, but as it is rarely transported otherwise than in skins, it is seldom tasted in its genuine purity except on the spot. It is rich and racy, and is said to be stouter than Port before it is fortified with brandy. The town of Beni Carlos, in Valencia, also supplies in considerable quantity a strong and full-flavoured red wine, which is exported largely to France, expressly to mingle with Claret for England. Paxarete,

made at an ancient monastery near Xeres, is an exceedingly sweet and choice white wine, in high esteem in this country; and the muscadine varieties of Fuen-caral, near Madrid, and of Peralta, in Navarre, present delicate dessert wines, highly agreeable to some palates. Manzanilla, a favourite wine of the Spaniards, raised on the coast of Andalusia, is of great purity, with considerable body and flavour: it is remarkably dry, slightly bitter, and much commended by the faculty for its invaluable dietetic properties. Alicante produces an excellent red wine, which ripens by age into one of the very first order; but this town is noted most for its *vino tinto*, a red sort in high local favour, being both strong and sweet. It comes from the *tintilla* grape: like the wine of Cyprus, it is said to possess healing qualities, and to be efficacious as an external remedy for wounds. The products of Valencia and Alicante, being rich in colour and full of body, are often employed in simulating Port wine, the casks for which are made to resemble Oporto pipes in size as well as appearance. A very large proportion of these wines find their way to France, for the purpose of blending with weaker growths.

Near Alicante reservoirs for the irrigation of the vine grounds have been constructed on a grand scale. About twelve miles from the town a tank is formed by damming up a valley with an embankment 240 feet high, and 40 thick. This supplies water for an entire year. Others, though of smaller dimensions, are established in suitable localities, which makes the cultivation of the vine in the south an expensive operation, on account of the climate being over dry. So much felt, indeed, is this in some districts, and so oppressive was the drought and abun-

dant the vintage in the summer of 1858, that at Huesca, in Arragon, an extensive proprietor considered it would have been easier and cheaper to irrigate his vineyards with wine than with water. At Aranda del Duero, in Old Castile, wine would also seem to be occasionally cheaper than water; for an English gentleman of veracity, travelling through that province, witnessed some bricklayers at work mixing their mortar with wine instead of water; and this, we are informed, was no unusual occurrence, as there were several instances of houses in that town having been built with mortar prepared in this way.* The town-hall of Toro, in the province of Leon, is likewise said to have been erected with mortar slaked with wine, and for a similar reason.

No province of Spain is without its vintage, but those of the north,—Galicia, the Asturias, Navarre, and Biscay,—are but little known beyond their immediate localities. In the latter district five or six different grapes are often grafted on one stock, which renders the produce very dubious as to character or quality. But it is ever in the lovely and fertile region of Andalusia that the wines most esteemed by foreigners are made. The mountains round Malaga are clothed from the valley depths to the summits with vines, and the little habitations of the peasantry peep out romantically on the acclivities around them. Many of the plantations are located at a great height from the level of the sea, where the earth for the roots requires to be very carefully secured. Wines both sweet and luscious are

* Both these anecdotes rest on the authority of Mr. Lumley, Her Majesty's Secretary of the Spanish Legation, as given in his official report to the Foreign Office on the Commerce of Spain.—*Vide Parliamentary Report,—Secretaries of Embassies, 1860.*

made in the vicinity of the city, and no less than ten thousand presses are said to be kept at work during the vintage in that and the neighbouring districts. The Malaga, usually so called, is always mingled with a portion of wine burnt a little in the boiling, to impart its peculiar flavour. This sort, obtained from a white grape, is very powerful, and has been long in high repute. For the mountain wines the grapes are pressed when somewhat riper than for the drier kinds. The "Lagrima," made from the droppings of very ripe grapes, suspended for that purpose without undergoing any pressure, is a luscious liqueur, obtained from the large muscatel grape. In the hilly district called Axarquia, the vine is extensively cultivated, and such is the benignity of the climate, that it gives three separate harvests of grapes. The first occurs in June, and furnishes the muscatel raisins,—the bloom and the lexias, which are exported as such. The two vintage harvests take place in September and October. It is wonderful to observe the fruitfulness of the soil of the Axarquia. Wherever the ground is unoccupied by the vine, the prickly pear luxuriates, and feeds the cochineal insect; while olives, almonds, figs, oranges, lemons, pomegranates, and even the sugar-cane, flourish in profusion under that glorious sky. Eight millions of pounds of muscatel and bloom raisins, and thirty thousand arrobas* of bloom and lexias in casks, were exported from Malaga, the produce of one season, with no less than 20,000 jars of grapes; yet the make of wine, notwithstanding, sustained no diminution. The muscatel grape cannot be cultivated more than four leagues from the coast. The chief produce of this pro-

* The arroba of Malaga is equal to 4·186 gallons, old measure.

vince is white, but there is a red wine of the richer class, of a sweet yet tart taste, called Tintilla, and Tinto di Rota, *anglicé* Tent. It is made about five leagues from Cadiz, of a grape said to be tinted throughout, and is generally used as a stomachic. There is also a wine flavoured with cherries, called Guindre, whence its name. The vineyards around Malaga produce from 30,000 to 40,000 butts per annum. The Americans take the largest portion of the exports. The English Consul, in an official report, states that whilst it requires ten butts of French wine to make one butt of brandy, three of Malaga will yield the same quantity of alcohol. Prices vary, but secondary qualities realize high rates. As much as £200 has been paid for a cask of very old prime wine.

The Balearic isles of MAJORCA and MINORCA furnish wines of fair quality, but the vintage is not treated in the most judicious manner, the grapes being fermented for two or three weeks in deep stone cisterns, and added to at repeated intervals, so that the operation is frequently checked in its progress, and seldom fully completed. The liquor is drawn off into large tuns, and there the secondary fermentation, as might be expected, is often so violent as to burst the casks, though made of olive staves four inches thick, and bound with hoops proportionately strong. In Majorca the wines made near Palma are accounted the best, and there is a very good red variety known as Aleyor. The latter island produces a muscadine wine called Pollentia.

Ireland seems to have nurtured an early predilection for the wines of Spain. From a remote period Galway was a famous trading port with that country, and its merchants are said to have supplied nearly all Ireland

with wine. The municipal records witness that in the year 1615 "upwards of 1200 tuns of Spanish wine were landed here, for account of the merchants of Galway."

In Spain the effects of the *oidium* were severely felt throughout the kingdom, and in some districts the failure was so complete, that the growers, for several seasons, were unable to pay any rents at all. It first appeared in 1852. Vines near the coast, and on the banks of rivers or damp marshy sites, suffered most; but those on higher soils, and even in the mountains, did not always escape. The produce of the vineyards during the intensity of the malady was reduced on the average 25 per cent. of an ordinary year; on the coast it was only one quarter of the usual yield, whilst in parts of Catalonia 90 per cent. of the crop was lost, and in Biscay it was altogether destroyed. Of the several provinces of Spain, Arragon seems to have suffered the least. Notwithstanding the generally received opinion that second-class wines will not bear a sea voyage, since the havoc committed by the grape-blight in adjoining countries a large export trade of a seemingly permanent character sprung up, to the great satisfaction and profit of the Spanish grower.



SECTION VII.

The Wines of France.

PROMINENT among the wine-producing countries of Europe stands the favoured and fertile region of France, whose whole expanse, from the borders of the Rhine to the base of the Pyrenees, presents a succession of prolific vineyards, where the most agreeable and delicate wines are grown in great variety and profusion. The ground contains every description of strata that is most congenial to the vine; the surface, diversified with ever-recurring and gently swelling elevations, abounds in favourable aspects; the difference of temperature in the several districts occasions numberless distinctive shades in the character and quality of the fruit; and these bountiful gifts of Nature have been greatly enhanced by the industry and skill of her active people. The period at which the vine first found its way into France is involved in much uncertainty. It is generally supposed that it reached Europe from the East, and was introduced into Gallia Narbonensis by the Phœceans, who, at a very remote date, founded a city at Marseilles. Some ascribe its introduction to a Tuscan emigrant; Cæsar and other Roman authorities, with more probability, advert to it as a mere commercial transaction. Whatever may have been the true period of its arrival it appears to have found a congenial resting-place, for it flourished vigorously, and became sufficiently fruitful

to form an article of early export. The wines of Narbonne, of Vienne, and of Marseilles are mentioned by Roman writers, and it is fair to presume that, except among the northern Celtic tribes, wine in their day was largely in use.

From the testimony of early historians, it would appear that the climate of ancient Gaul was too frigid to produce either wine or oil, and that beer and mead constituted the aboriginal beverage. But the retarding hand of tyranny and oppression which usually characterized Roman domination in their distant colonies, was yet more severely felt by a hard-faring and toil-worn community than unpropitious seasons. On the ground of its lessening the production of grain, cultivation of the vine was prohibited alike in Spain, Gaul, and Britain; the plant was unsparingly rooted up, and for nearly two centuries the grape continued a "forbidden fruit." But traditional love of its culture had sunk deeply into the hearts of the people, and the decree that once more restored to them the smiling vineyard, and permitted them to quaff its generous juice, was welcomed to the hearts of millions with unbounded delight. Progressive increase marked their patient labours, and by the fourth century the propagation of the vine had again made considerable progress both in Aquitaine and on the banks of the Saône. With the advancement of agriculture the soil and climate gradually improved, and the inhabitants of the more northern departments followed the example of their southern neighbours in the culture and utilization of the grape. The banks of the Cher, Marne, and Moselle became richly mantled with vines, and their rising fame, attracting the cupidity of rude contiguous nations, formed, it is said, a leading

motive for their frequent irruptions. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, during the sanguinary wars for the possession of the Holy Land, some of the crusaders on their return brought with them from Corinth, Cyprus, and other places rich muscat vines, till then unknown in France. The plants were first set at the foot of the Pyrenees, and thence came the rich Frontignan, Lunel, and Rivesaltes sweet or luscious wines. The introduction of other varieties was subsequently carried out to an incalculable extent, but for the preferable growths we are still indebted to the ancient provinces of Dauphiny, Champagne, Burgundy, and the Bordelais. The wines of the northern departments are sound and useful, but with few exceptions they are of an inferior order, and the crops seldom exceed the wants of the resident population; whilst those of Languedoc and other divisions in the south are remarkable as well for strength as their superior flavour, and as sweet wines some of them rank very high. Although this latter description is obtainable in abundance from other climes, and some may be thought stouter and richer, yet none can outvie, for bright limpidity and luscious fragrance, or be less cloying than those of France, where also originated the *mousseux* or effervescent class, of which Champagne stands the peerless sample. But it is in their more purely vinous properties that French wines excel those of most other countries, and so multitudinous are the varieties, that it is affirmed there is no growth in the world which might not find a counterpart in some one or another of her products, ever skilfully fabricated according to approved scientific maxims. To an English palate the lighter kinds may not, on first acquaintance, prove

so relishing or agreeable as the stronger brandied wines to which it has been most accustomed; they, however, in reality impart not only a cheerfulness and exhilaration, — a kind of easy elastic buoyancy entirely different from what attends the use of spirituous heavier wines, — but have, when taken largely, a much less injurious effect on the constitution. By a stranger they should at first be drunk sparingly, for, on account of their nascent acidity, a free use of them at the outset frequently occasions considerable derangement of the digestive functions; but when persons become sufficiently accustomed to them, they constitute a pleasant and wholesome beverage.*

The French arrange their wines in three classes, — common, ordinary, and fine. The two former they drink from tumblers, as Englishmen take beer, after the addition of water at discretion; for the fine dry wines, so much relished for their high aroma and piquancy, ordinary wine-glasses are used. The estimation and current price placed on any given sorts may be occasionally somewhat capricious, but it is ordinarily regulated by the proportion and perfection of certain innate or reputed properties peculiar to their growth: thus, the Burgundy and Bordeaux are appreciated for their superior flavour and bouquet; while the qualities sought in the produce of the Midi are body, colour, and strength. The plains in the north and western portions of the kingdom yield light and generally inferior wines, the alcohol in which ranges from 12 to 16 per cent. The finest of the Bordeaux wines seldom exceed that strength, but on the sides of the high mountain elevations that run through the east and south of

* Dr. J. H. Holdsworth's *Mem. of a Tour in France*.

France, from Dijon to the Pyrenees, at whose base flow the waters of the Saône, the Rhône, and the Mediterranean, the vine flourishes in great abundance and luxuriance, and its fruit, attaining a perfect maturity, secretes a larger portion of sugar, and produces, consequently, wine of great strength. First in this region are the Burgundy growths, which are stouter than those raised further north; whilst they, in their turn, yield in that respect to the product of the south; and at the southern extremity, next the eastern Pyrenees, where the sun pours down an almost tropical heat, and where the sea breezes come charged with refreshing moisture, all the requisites for the development of the higher qualities of the grape seem to be happily concentrated, and the wines here are high-flavoured, potent, and rich.

Prior to the commencement of the eighteenth century it will hardly be disputed, that with the English consumer the wines of France held an undivided preference. By the provisions of a commercial compact between England and Portugal negotiated at this period, and memorable even to the present day as "the Methuen treaty," differential duties were conceded in favour of the latter country, which brought forward its staple produce more prominently and advantageously than before, and gradually engendered a belief that French wines were less adapted to our climate than those of the southern peninsula. Great repugnance, however, was at first evinced towards so sudden and radical a change in a fond and deep-rooted opinion: the poet and the dramatist levelled their sharpest sarcasms at "the heavy beverage," nor were political cabals wanting to contend in open resistance against the alleged clownish heresy

and scandalous innovation, now openly and unsparingly denounced. Alex. Cunningham, a grave contemporary historian, remarks, vol. ii. 220, that "It was strange to see how much the desire of French wine, and the dearness of it, alienated many men from the Duke of Marlborough's friendship." The hard drinkers complained that they were poisoned by Port, and those formed almost a party: Dr. Aldrich, dean of Christchurch, surnamed 'the priest of Bacchus,' Dr. Ratcliff, General Churchill, &c.; "And all the bottle companions, many physicians, and great numbers of the lawyers and inferior clergy, and, in fine, the loose women too, were united together in the faction against the Duke of Marlborough." Whatever may have been the basis on which this aversion was founded, there can be no doubt that it was earnestly and extensively felt; yet, apart from the brandy which is infused to give factitious strength to both Port and Sherry, there is no more real ardency in their character than belongs to French wines, which, resting as they do solely on their own refreshing and exhilarating properties, would infallibly be spoiled if subjected to such treatment. Claret especially, which by many is considered weak because it is not heady, and therefore often thought to possess no tonic powers, is, on the contrary, well known for its dietetic virtues, and is very usually recommended by French physicians for its great restorative qualities. The same may be said of Burgundy, no less than of Hermitage, Roussillon, and others, and few will be heard to complain that the sparkling and grateful Champagne ever injured any body's health. The climate of France, indeed, is remarkably well adapted for the production of vintages of the highest merit; for

wine, to be distinguished for its purity and delicacy, with freedom from any taint or grossness, requires a temperature alike moderate and even : the grape should ripen gradually, and be swelled by the autumnal dews. But it is in the peculiar and congenial native soil that chiefly lies the secret of the great superiority of her products, the strata of the most valued vineyards being dry, gravelly, or sandy, and exempt from that rich loam which engenders a rank and coarser vegetation. Nothing can exemplify this more clearly than the gradations in the character of the different growths of Claret. Beginning with the Margaux district, which is equally calcareous, flinty, and sandy, the wine there raised is remarkable for its fragrant delicacy. As we proceed onwards to St. Julien, we come upon a somewhat stouter wine, though still of a distinguished bouquet. The growths of Pauillac, yet further west, and lying in a rather heavier soil, are fuller in flavour and dark in colour, and at the same time less delicate ; while a similar increase of body and tint marks the St. Estèphe, where the land augments in strength and marly richness. Along the Rhône, and in the Burgundy and Champagne provinces, the same differences of soil are noticeable, with always a similar distinction in the flavour, according to its greater or less degree of fertility.

The cultivation of the vine in France has increased very considerably within the present century, extending latterly not only to lands which by nature are best adapted to that purpose, but also to many where similar favourable conditions of soil and temperature do not exist, the inferior nature of their produce being counter-vailed by greater abundance, while the more eligible sites and aspects are still reserved for primer growths.

The vintager of the present day, chiefly intent on obtaining a large return, has partly abandoned the old system, under which quality was the principal object in view. A benignant exposure is no longer the all-important consideration it formerly was, and the grower prefers a rich soil ensuring an abundant harvest to those poor, light lands, from whence alone the choicest and most high-flavoured wines are more sparingly raised. The application of manure, in former times proscribed by law, is now commonly resorted to, and sometimes carried to excess. Unremitting labour is bestowed on the soil; the vines are planted closer together, and the finer sorts, producing superior qualities in smaller quantities, are neglected. Greater attention, however, is bestowed on their fabrication, the cellars are kept in better order, and the wine more carefully preserved. The joint influence of these causes has been every where felt. In some places the yield has increased by one-tenth, in others by a fifth, a third, a half, and in a few instances double and treble over previous returns. A falling off in quality and a diminution of price has been the natural consequence of so large an augmentation. Leaving finest growths out of the account, and which are confined to very small districts, the quality of the vinous produce of France may be said to have degenerated: it has lost in flavour and aroma what it has gained in fecundity; and the adoption of the new methods of tillage, the introduction of the commoner sorts of grape, and the abuse of manure, have caused the wine to lose much of its pristine superiority and distinctive properties,—the grower seeking his compensation in the sale of much larger quantities.* Wines, again, of second-rate quality

* Viscount Chelsea's Report on the Wine-trade in France.—See *Parliamentary Return,—Secretaries of Embassies*, 1859.

are those which at present are the least profitable to the farmer. Fashion, a change in the public taste, and the extensive subdivision of property have reduced the demand as well as their money value. The choicest kinds will always maintain their supremacy among the wealthier classes, especially in foreign countries, and third-rate wines are freely consumed by the population at large ; but the intermediate sorts are too dear for the latter, and not valued by the former : they are consequently neglected, and can find no remunerative market.

Large as is the area formed by domains so extensive, three or four districts are alone unfriendly to the grape. The soil, whilst generally fertile, varies considerably, the ground being constituted by different alternations of granitic, calcareous, gravelly, argillaceous, marly, and sandy earths. It is on the calcareous land that the finer dry wines are produced. The vines are mostly planted in ranges sufficiently distant to secure to them the sun and air at all times, and the mode of training usually pursued is the "tíge bas," or low-stem system, the young shoots of the year being tied to stakes from four to five feet in height. The plant is propagated by layers of buds, which are taken up after the vintage, as well as by slips chosen from among the cuttings. Vines from the latter live longest, and bear most fruit ; but those from the layers shoot the earliest. The season of the vintage is one of stirring interest and alacrity ; the merry groupings of peasantry now to be seen in almost every field commence their labour soon after the sun has dispersed the dew, and if the weather continues fair, the gathering is urged forward with as much rapidity as possible, in order to effect the pressing in one day. Wine is made in no less than eighty of the departments,

and the aggregate quantity raised is very large, whilst the distinctive shades of character and quality, occasioned by difference of site and soil, are minute and innumerable. They are divided into six classes of red, seven of white, and four of *vins de liqueur*, and comprise altogether 250 white and 460 red, besides nine liqueurs. To describe them all would fail to interest the general reader, even were it practicable, and a large portion being little appreciated beyond the immediate seat of their production, attention will be principally directed to such as are best known to commerce, and in most repute both at home and in foreign countries.

Claret. Under the denomination of wines of the Gironde, part of ancient Gascony, are included the vintages of the districts in the vicinity of Bordeaux, many leagues in extent, and, of all the produce of France, these are most familiar to foreigners. Every where else they pass under the generic name of *Bordeaux*, but in England they are called Claret, which is either derived, as some suppose, from Clairac, in Gascony, from whence large supplies were formerly imported, or is a corruption of the word *clairret*, signifying such as are red or rose-coloured. In its integrity Claret is a mixture of several sorts, specially adapted for use in this country, with a small portion of spirits of wine in addition. About thirteen leagues to the north of Bordeaux the Médoc estate commences. It extends along the left bank of the rivers Gironde and Garonne, and comprehends the most celebrated growths of the country, including those of Châteaux Lafitte, Margaux, and Latour, as well as the vineyards yielding the secondary wines of St. Estèphe, St. Julien, Pauillac, and some others. Too much stress, however, should not be place d

on the value of any particular name, as the varying influences of season, temperature, and other accidental causes often occasion the less esteemed growths to equal, and sometimes even to surpass those in greater repute. A remarkable instance of this occurred in the fine vintage of 1815, wherein a *fourth growth* in rank on the Margaux estate so far exceeded all the others in high character, that it became almost priceless. The entire crop was purchased by a merchant of Bordeaux, and after fifteen years in bottle it was still in such perfection as to surpass in a remarkable degree any other Claret ever brought into this country.

From the frequent mention of Claret wines by old writers, a large proportion of the best red growths was probably of that description. As long as they were drunk without an admixture of water, it was of little moment whether they were of a purple or rose colour; but the modern custom of using all the ordinary kinds in a diluted state has led to a change of practice in this respect, and the farmer strives to supply them as high coloured as possible. To attain this object the fermentation is protracted, and the principal ingredients tampered with; the consequence is, that many of these wines, though abounding in body and colour, retain from the beginning the germs of early decay, and the decomposition of the liquor is accelerated, acidity is prematurely engendered, and notwithstanding they might possess considerable stamina, the major part of such wines do not keep well. Still, many French vintages will continue sound for a considerable number of years: Roussillon has been drunk a century old in high perfection. Other kinds prove good when kept fifty or sixty years, particularly such as are grown on

the Rhône, in the eastern Pyrenees, in Cahors, in the Gard, and the Var. The wines of Champagne, Burgundy, and Médoc are less durable, being more delicate, with less body. Of the latter it may be useful to remark, that although the word Médoc is sometimes erroneously employed to signify wines of a particular class and quality, it is simply the local name given to plantations situate at the mouth of the river Gironde, where the best wines of the district are produced, as well as many of an inferior order, all, however, passing under the general appellation of Médoc wines.

In the Bordelais the culture of the vine generally is the same as in the other parts of France. The white wines of this district succeed best when grown on hill sides exposed to the south, and on a gravelly or flinty soil. Conspicuous among this class stand the wines of Sauterne, with a reputation extending over a century, and those of Graves, Barsac, and the Châteaux Yquem and Carbonnieux. The latter is produced in much abundance: it is distinguished by a peculiar flavour and an agreeable aroma; is lighter than Sauterne or Preignac; is less heady, less luscious, but in all respects equally delicate and vinous. This wine is said to have secured an early and profitable market within the sealed shores of Turkey, *à-propos* of which the following anecdote is recorded: "The estate of Carbonnieux once belonged to the abbey of St. Croix, near Bordeaux. The holy fathers realized an enormous profit by sending their wines to Turkey, notwithstanding the provisions of the Mussulman law were wholly opposed to their admission. To mystify Mahomet, however, was a holy work in the estimation of the children of St. Benet, so they exported their white wine, of which the limpidity was remarkable, as 'the

mineral waters of Carbonnieux.' Under this plausible denomination the wine eluded the rigour of the Ottoman custom-house, and baffled the vigilance and anathemas of the imperial prophets. The children of the triple crown being thus triumphant over the sons of the Koran, a sagacious Frenchman remarked, 'that it was much better to give wine for water, than to pass off water for wine,' as too frequently happened in his own country." At Carbonnieux there is, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary collections of vines in existence, which is being continually further enriched by contributions from all parts of the world.

The excellence of the Bordelais growths has been recognised through many ages, and no class of wines has maintained its ancient reputation more uniformly, being characterized by a silky softness and charming perfume, which partake of the nature of the violet and the raspberry. At present they unquestionably rank among the most perfect that France produces, and as they keep well, and even improve by sea-carriage, are freely exported to all parts of the world. The author of a *Trip to Languedoc*, a lively and graceful itinerary, written and published in the time of Louis XIV., describes the Garonne in his day as being "so large at the point of land where it forms its junction with the Dordogne, that it really is like a sea; and the tide is so impetuous, that we made the passage from Blaye to Bordeaux in less than four hours,—

" Bordeaux, the first of Traffic's daughters,
Sitting in middle of the waters,
And welcoming, with stately pride,
More ships than all the earth beside.

"The port, indeed, was so crowded with vessels, that

we found it difficult to get to shore. The great fair was then about to take place, and had attracted this throng of visitors to carry off the wine of the country :

“ For rude as in reality,
This famous port of ours may be,
It has the honour, when they dine,
To furnish half the North with wine.

“ A frightful quantity is exported every year, but not of the best sort. They treat their customers like Germans.* It was not only prohibited to sell the best wines for exportation, but the merchant could not get a prime bottle at the tavern.”

“ Popular opinion in France regards Bordeaux as not only less heady or intoxicating, but (even apart from this character) more wholesome than Burgundy. This may find some explanation in the larger ingredients of tannin ($1\frac{1}{2}$ to 1), of salts (nearly 2 to 1), and especially of iron (about 15 to 1), contained in the Bordeaux wines. The latter quantity—from 6 to 7 grains in a pint—is equal to a full medicinal dose.”† The best white kinds of this department are of superior quality: they are divided into dry and luscious, and will keep a long time. For some years past they have been advancing in estimation, and, generally speaking, may be said to come to us in a more genuine state than the red wines, which are often subjected to various processes by the Bordeaux merchants, in order to prepare and suit them for particular markets. In the commune of Ordonnac there is a small vineyard belonging to the ancient abbey of Ile, which produces a wine with the

* In the Austrian dominions, and other parts of Germany, it was formerly a rule in their dealings to compel the buyer of every cask of prime wine to take at the same time one of inferior quality.

† Dr. Brinton *On Food and its Digestion*.

odour of roses; but it is inferior in other respects, and reckoned of small value.

Burgundy is the product of the province of that name, and is rightly esteemed as one of the most perfect wines known; whilst for richness of flavour, grateful aroma, and all the more delicate qualities essential to vinous excellence, it cannot be surpassed. It is easily recognised by its beautiful colour, its generous and enlivening piquancy, and the exquisite perfume of its bouquet,—a genial and untiring theme for the historian and lyrist of many a past generation. The soil which produces the grape is most favourable, and to the natural advantages of an equable climate, and benignant sites and aspects, must be superadded unceasing care and industry in culture, skilful treatment of the fruit, and sound judgment in the process of manufacture, culminating in a product that bears a high character all over the world. Paramount among the superior red kinds stand those of Clos Vougeot, Beaune, Chambertin, Nuits, Pomard, Volnay with its refreshing taste of the raspberry, St. Georges, Richebourg, and the delicious Romanée Conti, which is held to be the most perfect wine in Burgundy. Other growths, though of less fulness, are still very fine, and many of the communes produce white as well as red. The white wines of Burgundy, although numerous, are less generally known, yet they are not inferior to the red either in flavour or character, and maintain a high position among French vintages. In the territory of Volnay stands the vineyard of Santenot: whilst the upper portion gives the much esteemed Meursault, the middle and lower yield a red variety, which is often preferred to that of Volnay. From the south-west

quarter comes the grateful Montrachet, high in favour for its exquisite delicacy: possessing body combined with dryness, and a luscious taste without insipidity, it is generally accepted as the champion wine of the province, and regarded by many French connoisseurs as no mean rival to Tokay itself. Most of the other vintages differ essentially with these, and are generally inferior. The hill slopes of the little vineyard of Perrières yield a dry white kind equal in quality to Chambertin, of a slight sulphurous taste, agreeable to the palate, and much esteemed because of its vicinity to the Montrachet. The only other sort that calls for particular mention is the well-known Chablis. Pale in colour, delicate and pellucid, dry and diuretic in quality, with an agreeable aroma though somewhat flinty in taste, its sterling merits have secured for it a permanent place in public esteem.

There is an infinite variety in the wines of Burgundy which an Englishman can hardly be supposed to comprehend. Accustomed to vintages less delicate than potent, his favourite beverage is chosen more for fullness of body than perfection of flavour. On account of their great delicacy, the quality is easily affected: the most finished and perfect, the French say, are deteriorated even by so short a passage across the Channel as that from Calais to Dover. The finest Burgundy is never exported except in bottle, and the quantity produced being very small, few reach England better than those of the second class. The French are fastidious in their preferences, and retain the best for their own use at as good a price as can be obtained any where else; those which rank the highest are consequently scarce wines with the foreigner. From the second year in bottle the stoutest and hardest samples have attained their full

perfection; but they are extremely sensitive, and the least vibration or shaking is often sufficiently disturbing to render them cloudy and unfit for immediate use. They maintain their quality well for ten years, but the white sorts are apt to become ropy with age.

Hermitage. A lofty granitic hill near the inconsiderable town of Tain, situate on the left bank of the Rhône, claims the far-famed vineyardsyclept the Hermitage. The wine so named is the product of plantations in the department of the Drôme, once a portion of ancient Dauphiny. Of these the vines of Valance are the most conspicuous for the excellence of their fruit, which is grown on slopes of no great elevation, but with a warm southern aspect, and forming part of a chain of granitic mountains which extend from Tain to St. Vallier. Tradition has it, that a denizen of the neighbouring town of Condrieux, having in a fit of contrition or piety decided on adopting the solitude and discipline of an anchorite, established himself on a barren hill near Tain. He occupied his vacant hours with breaking to pieces the stones and rocky fragments that surrounded his cell, and planted among them some vine-slips obtained from Condrieux: they flourished to admiration. His example was quickly followed by others, a sterile eminence was soon converted into a smiling vineyard, and a future community of eremites lent new sanctity to the cheerful scene. On the summit of the principal mount, named Bessas, are still to be seen the ruins of the retreat of the hermits, the last of whom died about a century and half ago.

The quantity of this wine annually gathered is considerable, but differing much in quality, which is further affected by the influence of changing seasons; it is

divisible into five classes, the higher grades being prized throughout Europe for their firmness, vinosity, and splendid bouquet. Among the French the Hermitage is esteemed as the fullest and richest coloured, and is universally accorded a high position among the choicest of their numerous wines. It is drawn from two varieties of plants, called the little and great *scyras*, currently believed on the spot to have been brought from Shiraz, in Persia, by one of the missionary fraternity of Bessas. Wine of the first class is not bottled for exportation until it has been mellowed four or five years in the cask. The produce of a good season always commands a high price, and it will keep sound for twenty years.

The department of the Rhône, anciently known as the Lyonnais and Beaujolais, retains its well-earned repute for the superior character of its vintages; and among its white wines, as well as the red, those of the Hermitage occupy a foremost place. It is made from white grapes only, chiefly the greater and lesser *rousanne*, and constitutes the richest and driest of any of French origin. It is soft and rich on the palate, and has an agreeable aroma, unlike any other white wine known. In colour it is of a straw yellow, but when long kept it gradually acquires more of an amber tint. It is very durable, and will keep for a century without any deterioration, although after a period of twenty-five or thirty years its flavour and fragrance undergo a change. Ermitage-paille, a straw wine of high merit, is made from select and perfect bunches of the white grape, and manufactured with scrupulous care. It is rich, luscious, and spirituous, and commands a very high market-price. The quantity raised is small, and to obtain it in full perfection a peculiar season is requisite for the fruit to

attain exact maturity, and to continue dry and mild whilst the grapes are mellowing on the straw.

Two kindred wines raised in the same province, the red of Côte Rôtie and the white of Condrieux, may fittingly have mention here for their several commendable qualities. The former is remarkable for the brightness of its colour, its briskness and strength; in taste it is slightly bitter, and bears a decided odour of the violet; the latter is luscious and agreeable, with a bouquet of great sweetness, which is preserved a long time. The quantity made of the best quality is not large, and wines of a secondary character are often passed off on an unwary buyer for the first.

Roussillon. As we approach the fertile shores of the Mediterranean, we find the vine flourishing, and displaying the choicest fruit. With such advantages, the produce of these territories might be expected to surpass the best growths of other departments; but it is principally in the sweet class of white wines, which are drawn from the ripest and richest grapes, that their superiority becomes manifest. It is here that the choicest *muscadine* wines are grown,—luscious, spirituous, and richly fragrant. The Frontignan variety is known from all others by the very marked flavour of the grape from which it is obtained. When the wine is old, the taste of the fruit becomes less perceptible, but it continues always surpassingly luscious, and its perfume has been likened to that of the elder-flower. The Rivesaltes has a rich, oily smoothness, a fragrant aroma, with a delicate flavour of the quince, and is, perhaps, the best muscadine wine grown. The red wines of Roussillon are strong and generous, with great depth of colour and remarkable durability; but

they are commonly thick and heavy, and almost always deficient in the more subtile properties of flavour and aroma, which, in a great measure, are sacrificed to the desire of ensuring the complete developement of the colouring matter. From the use of new methods, however, and the attention more recently bestowed on the subject, there is reason to expect that, in good time, all the wines of the south will be much ameliorated, and acquire that distinction among the vintages of France to which their intrinsic worth ought naturally to raise them. A good and substantial wine, popularly known as Masdeu, is a growth of this department; it is the product of a black grape, is very deep in colour, and combines a rich mellow flavour with a good bouquet. Firmness and vinosity of a very perfect kind are its chief characteristics, and it so much resembles Port wine as to be sometimes mistaken for it: it improves in bottle, and will keep to a considerable age.

Champagne. The wines for which the ancient province of Champagne is justly celebrated, rank first in excellence among the vintages of France. By Champagne is commonly understood a sparkling or frothing liquor, containing an excess of carbonic acid gas, which is set free on removing the pressure that retained it in solution. This notion is not altogether correct, for the district furnishes many excellent wines besides such as effervesce. Whilst their exhilarating virtues are familiar to everyone, it should be borne in mind that the briskest wines are not always the best, and certainly keep the worst: they are the most defective in true vinous quality, and the small portion of alcohol they contain rapidly escapes from the bubbling froth as it rises on the surface, carrying with it much of the aroma, and the liquor that

remains in the glass soon becomes nearly vapid. Hence the still, or the creaming, or the slightly sparkling Champagnes are more highly prized by connoisseurs, and carry a better price, than the effervescent. Sillery has no sparkle at all.

It is on the banks of the Marne,—at Bouzy, Sillery, Epernay, and some other estates, that the best “river wines,” as they are sometimes called, are produced. The white kinds will not admit being mixed with any but those of their own growth, and they generally remain the pure production of the spot they are named after. The grey Champagne is obtained by treading the grapes a quarter of an hour before they are taken to the press. A rose-coloured variety is formed by continuing this operation a longer time; but in the commune of Rheims this tinted produce ranks as of second quality only, being lightly tinged with a little strong red wine, or a few drops of elderberry liquor, which not only injures both the taste and quality, but checks any preference for wines of that colour that might otherwise prevail. It is from this district that the still Sillery is obtained. This wine has more body, is more spirituous than any other white Champagne, and is distinguished by a dry and agreeable taste, the best being the produce of the blackest variety of the grape. It is, perhaps, the most durable as well as most wholesome to drink of all the wines of this province, the fermentation being more perfect than usual. It is the hilly territory of Rheims, also, that supplies the best red Champagnes. The aspect is east and north, the soil light and calcareous, the produce rich, potent, and well flavoured, retaining their qualities to an advanced age. The first vine-lands are those of Bouzy

and Ambonnay, yielding either red or white varieties at pleasure. The red of Bouzy approach in bouquet the first wines of Burgundy.

In all the superior grounds of Champagne they cultivate the black grape known as the "golden plant," (*plant doré*), being a variety of the vine called *pinet*, and red and white *pineau*. It might seem, at first, somewhat singular that the darkest fruit should furnish wines of a white, grey, or straw colour, but such, nevertheless, is the fact; that species, too, ripens more readily, resists the frosts and rains common in vintage time much better, and yield stouter produce than the lighter sorts. At Epernay, where the black grape is most in favour, wine is made approaching that of Aÿ in delicacy, and often surpassing it both in saccharine abundance and fragrantcy of bouquet.

The province of Champagne is very fruitful, and produces wine almost endless in variety and quality. Some classes, however, are too meagre to engage the notice of foreigners, while others are too light to bear exportation. The utmost care and skill are unremittingly devoted to the manufacture of the sparkling wines, and bringing them to perfection, and it is interesting to observe the amount of assiduity and expensive labour bestowed on the process. The vine-crop designed for this purpose is gathered with the greatest care possible. The grapes for the purest class consist only of those raised from an approved species of vine. Every grape that has not acquired a perfect maturity, every decayed berry touched with the frost, or pricked, is rejected. In collecting, in emptying the baskets, and in removal to the press-room, every motion that can blemish the fruit is avoided, as well as any injurious action from

the sun's rays. When the quantity is sufficient for a pressing, they are heaped as gently as possible on the wine-press, and the bunches methodically arranged. Perhaps there is no production of the soil that requires more care than the grape, to make it yield these delicious wines in full perfection, and this may be the main cause of a standing complaint against Champagne,—that it cannot be obtained of uniform quality, which, moreover, will never be obviated by the mistaken practice of tunnng it into barrels of a hundred and sixty litres only in size. The wine of each separate cask must and will vary, for the minutest change in the process of developement affects in some degree the precision it is wished to attain. The portion which is intended to effervesce is put into bottles in March and April after it is made; that designed for still wine is not bottled until the autumn. For this purpose the barrel head is tapped, and a small brass pipe, with a fine gauze strainer attached to intercept the smallest foreign particles, is inserted. The bottles are filled to within two inches of the cork: with a subsequent formation of gas this space gradually diminishes, and should the void entirely close up by the expansion of the liquid, breakage generally ensues. The effervescence is owing to the carbonic acid gas generated in the fermentation. The gas being thus compressed by chemical affinities, scarcely begins to develop itself in the cask, but is very quickly reproduced in bottle. In this process the saccharine and tartarous properties are decomposed. If the latter principle predominate, the wine effervesces strongly, but is weak; if the saccharine principle be considerable, and the alcohol present in sufficient quantity to limit its decomposition, the quality is good.

Great skill and attention are employed to meet the difficulties arising from the circumstance that the wines do not ripen uniformly. Some will effervesce after being in bottle fifteen days, others will demand as many months. One wine will require a change of temperature, and must be brought from a deep cellar to another on the surface; a second will not exhibit a forward state before August; another kind, when patience is exhausted, and the expected developement almost hopeless, will flush up all of a sudden. Considered, indeed, in all its bearings, the ripening maturity of Champagne is most uncertain and changeable. The difference of the spot of growth; the mixture of fruit; the process in making; the storing and preservation in the wood; the glass of the bottles; the aspect, depth, and ventilation of the cellar,—all have a varied, and often inexplicable influence on the phenomena of effervescence.

For the sparkling kinds the strength of the bottles and their uniform thickness are carefully ascertained. They must be new, are closely examined and jingled together in pairs against each other, and every one with an air-bubble in the glass, or with too long or too narrow a neck, or with the least imperfection or malformation, is put aside. The bottles, when carefully and expeditiously filled, are laid horizontally in piles five or six feet high. They are first placed in the coldest cellars, and afterwards gradually removed to warmer temperatures. In July and August considerable breakage happens, occasioned by the expansion of the carbonic acid gas, and a loss of four to ten per cent. is usually occasioned. Sometimes, however, it amounts to thirty or forty per cent. It is remarkable, too, what uncertainty attends the process, for

of two piles of the very same wine, in the same part of the cellar, hardly a bottle may be left of one, while the other remains impassive, and without effervescence at all. A current of fresh air will sometimes occasion the wine to develop itself fiercely. The proprietor is thus placed every season in the alternative of suffering much loss by breakage, or put to great expense in aiding wine to ripen that will not progressively advance itself. Of the two evils he prefers submitting to breakage, rather than incur the trouble and cost of correcting the inertness of the liquor. If the damage be not more than eight or ten per cent. the owner is content; if it become more serious, he has the pile taken down, and the bottles placed upright for a suitable time. Sometimes he removes it into a deeper cellar, or finally uncorks it to disengage the superabundant gas, and to fill up the void left under the cork. This last operation occupies considerable time, and adds materially to the outlay.

The piles are longitudinal in form, and ranged parallel to each other, with a very small space between. The daily breakage, before it reaches its fullest extent, will be in one day perhaps five bottles, another ten, the next fifteen. When the gas develops itself with unwonted rapidity, the wine is wasted in large quantities, and it is difficult to save any portion of it. The overflow collects together by means of channels cut in the floor for that purpose. The workmen enter the cellar in wire masks, to guard against the fragments dispersed when the breakage is frequent, as in the month of August, the glass being often projected with considerable force. On displacing a pile, bottles are sometimes found, in spite of the cork and seal continuing still

entire, to have diminished in quantity nearly one half by evaporation, which has to be replaced; whilst in others a sediment is discernible, which it is necessary to remove. This, by no means an easy task, is managed by the workmen with much dexterity. The breakage ceases in the month of September, and in October the wines are ready for sale.

In the second winter, in order to remove the deposit formed in the summer, the bottles are placed with their mouths downwards and shaken for twenty days, to cause the sediment to pass into the neck. This done, the bottle is uncorked, the feculence removed, and a fifth part of the contents replaced by fresh liquor, when the bottles are again corked, tied, and stacked as before. If they continue any great time longer in the cellar, they are reopened and submitted to a second dislodgment of the deposit, and sometimes even to a third. It is a strict rule never to send Champagne from the factory without this being done, about fifteen days prior to its removal, for if omitted, the brightness of the wine would be affected by the sediment in the transit. The non-effervescing wines, if of the white species, all undergo the operation of uncorking and clearing at least once before they are sent away. Thus, to the last moment the wine continues in the maker's charge, the process is troublesome, irregular, and sufficiently expensive to account for the superior price demanded for Champagne of the first quality. Some proprietors of the finer growths never sell a bottle under 3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ francs, however abundant the season. Those are the best parties of whom to purchase where quality is the object. The first waste and losses of the vintage being over, they retain in their stores for many years a stock of

known character, with which they wait without impatience the too certain return of bad seasons and high prices. The wines of Champagne are divided into no less than six classes or degrees of quality, and hence the importance of ascertaining their precise grade by those who purchase. The annual exportation exceeds three million bottles, of which England takes one-fifth.

There is an exquisite delicacy pertaining to the wines of Champagne that is more sensible to the foreigner than is the quality which commends the richest Burgundy to the taste of the French amateur, and has laid the foundation of the unrivalled fame that has attended them through ages. The present perfection of Champagne may be dated from the coronation of Louis XIII., *anno* 1610; but the recognition of its worth can be traced back to the beginning of the fourteenth century,—an early reputation that since has never lacked voluntary homage. Even princes and sovereigns of other countries rendered it allegiance and tribute, for is it not written that Francis I. of France, Pope Leo X., Charles V. of Spain, and Henry VIII. of England, possessed vineyards at Aÿ as their exclusive property?—retaining resident superintendents to secure the genuine produce, each for his own table. In the middle of the seventeenth century a notable controversy arose on the respective merits of Champagne and Burgundy. Certain French physicians having attributed gout to the use of the latter, the school of medicine entered warmly into the discussion, which was not terminated in favour of the superior excellence of Champagne until 130 years after it commenced.

Of French wines, those most generally preferred are made in the department of the Côte d'Or, in that of

the Marne, the Yonne, the Drôme, and the Gironde. Besides these, down to the ordinary *vin de pays*, the intermediate varieties are very numerous, some of which are little inferior to others in high repute. At Cahors, on the banks of the Lot, they make white, rose-coloured, red, and black wines. The red and white are produced in the usual way. The rose-coloured variety is made of the weakest white wine poured upon the murk of the black grapes, which are never pressed. They gain colour and strength from this process, but are not held in any great esteem. The black wines are obtained from the fine *auxerrois* or *pied de perdrix* grape, so called because its stalk is red. Bordeaux is the principal market for this liquor, where it is used to strengthen or colour those of a lighter description. It is sometimes mingled with aromatics to make a common ratifia, and sometimes it is sold pure.

Lons-le-Saulnier, in the department of the Jura, is noted for its red and white, no less than for its *vins de paille* or straw wines, and several effervescent varieties, white, grey, and rose-coloured. The straw wines are luscious and stomachic, resembling somewhat those of Spanish origin. The sparkling white kinds are good, though not to be compared with Champagne. But one of the most extensive vine districts in France, if quantity rather than quality be considered, is the department of the Seine and Oise, which contains 16,298 hectares of vines, yielding 849,718 hectolitres of wine.* The whole of this vast crop is of very middling quality, even regarded as ordinary wines of the country, with little prospect of future improvement.

* One hectare is equal to 2·47 English acres; the hectolitre to 22 English gallons.

The wines known as *vins de liqueur* are those in which the saccharine principle has not entirely disappeared, and been converted into alcohol during the process of fermentation. Foremost in this class are the sweet wines of Salces, Rivesaltes, Lunel, Frontignan, Beziers, and similar kinds, both red and white. Excellent liqueurs, principally of cherries, are also made in the department of the Isère; and a vineyard in the commune of Rochegude, on the same river, produces a *tinto* of good quality.

Vins de paille are so denominated from the grapes being laid for several weeks upon straw before they are taken to the press. Sometimes, instead of being thus prepared, they are hung up in straw tresses: the produce, in either case, is a wine of great richness and delicacy. Straw wines are made in several of the departments, but those of the Hermitage bear the highest reputation.

Vins mousseux constitute the sparkling and effervescent class, always unmistakeable on account of the enlivening properties they spontaneously exhibit; they are raised on various estates in much abundance, being universally prized for their light and exhilarating properties. Of such are the celebrated wines of Champagne, which though not the strongest of their kind may be considered as the best, and are certainly the least injurious, even when freely taken. They intoxicate rather speedily, probably on account of the volatile state of the alcohol, and the abundance of carbonic acid gas they contain; but the excitement is of a more lively and agreeable character, and of shorter duration than when caused by any other liquor. Hence they have been prescribed with advantage for the relief of nervous

irritability and similar functional derangements, where the need of a brisk and cheering stimulant was indicated.

Vins cuits, or boiled wines, are of ancient date, having, it is supposed, passed from Asia and Greece. They are common in Italy and Spain as well as in France. The richest and finest grapes are selected, usually of the muscadine species, gathered during the hottest part of the day, in order that they may be free from dew and humidity of every kind. The wine, when boiled, is reduced to one-third of its original quantity. It is very pleasant to the taste, of a deep colour, delicate and generous. When very old, these wines are often passed off for Cyprus, Malmsey, Tinto, or Malaga of the best kind, as the owner may wish them to appear. Boiling is also adopted to make new wine have the appearance of old. Bordeaux wine of two years old so treated, will acquire the flavour of that which is ten or twelve in age.

In the south of France a description of wine is made called *muet*, for which the grapes are trodden and pressed at the vintage, and the juice is clarified immediately, to prevent fermentation. The must is then barrelled, and treated with fumings of sulphur, two or three times repeated. This wine never ferments; it has a sweetish flavour, with a strong sulphurous odour. It is sometimes called Calabrian wine, and is generally employed to give strength, sweetness, and durability to others deficient in these qualities.

In the island of CORSICA a very excellent variety of grape is grown, called the *sciaccarello*, which yields a wine of good quality. A superior red wine of the sweet class is made at Sartena: it bears a delicious flavour, and is stomachic. For its manufacture the best red

grapes are selected, and the stems of the bunches are twisted eight days before the vintage; they are then gathered, and kept eight days more on a floor, when the grapes are removed from the stems and pressed. This wine is so rich and luscious, that it is not fit to drink under two years. It may be kept twenty, and in gaining age it acquires strength and an exquisite bouquet. The vines of Corsica bear well, and yield sound dry wines equally good with those of the sweet class, but in quantities too small for extensive foreign commerce. This can only proceed from neglect of cultivation, for both soil and clime are eminently suited for the growth of wines equal to those of Spain. The portion exported is generally mingled with boiled wine; this gives it the colour and taste of Malaga, for which it is frequently sold to the merchants of the North on its arrival at the port of Leghorn.

The vine is one of the most important objects of cultivation in France, and the peculiar characteristics that distinguish the produce of the several districts may be thus summarily described:—

1. For the south region the wines are classed under four chief heads,—Roussillon, Languedoc, Provence, and Corsica. Those of Roussillon are produced exclusively in the department of the Pyrénées Orientales: they are strong, rich in colour, and being generous they keep long, travel well, and are good for blending with others. Sweet, dry, and ordinary wines equally abound. Under the name of wines of Languedoc are comprised all the produce of the Hérault, Aude, and a part of Gard. They are full in colour, and of remarkable body and strength. Hérault is the most important wine district in the south of France: its brandy trade

has nearly disappeared, but it is the largest producer of raw spirits in Europe. The red varieties are raised in the vineyards of St. Georges d'Orgues: they are of moderate quality, and generally very heady. The cultivation of Muscat, Frontignan, and Lunel has diminished of late years: they possess less flavour and do not keep so well as the products of Rivesaltes. This celebrated vine-ground is situated two leagues east of Perpignan; the soil is dry and granitic, and to the casual observer would appear incapable of sustaining any vegetation, yet it yields some of the best muscadine wine known. The Palus lands are so named from their deep and fertile alluvial mould, evidently the accumulated sediment of water over a long period. These wines possess a remarkable bouquet, which savours of the raspberry; they are not the first in esteem, but as they will bear long sea-voyages well, they are selected for export to America and India. Of the wines of Provence the greater portion belong to the ordinary class, and are nearly all consumed at the seat of production or the adjoining communes.

2. The region of the south-east embraces all the lower part of the basin of the Rhône: the sorts grown there are generally known as wines of the Côte du Rhône. They include the produce of the Gard, Vaucluse, the celebrated Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Ardèche, St. Peray, Hermitage, Côte Rôtie, Condrieux, and some others. The wines of the Rhône, indeed, have one particular advantage; viz. that those endowed with the fullest aroma are raised on the sides of hills having a constant exposure to the rays of a southern sun. This confers a degree of perfection on the grape, and a fruity flavour on the wine, not attainable in Claret, as witness

the choicer kinds of Hermitage and Côte Rôti, and particularly white Hermitage, considered by many of known taste and judgment to be the empress of all wines, especially if kept long enough in bottle to develop its qualities in full perfection. The growths of these localities were formerly of considerable commercial importance, but they are constantly on the decrease, the extent of the vine-grounds being now much reduced. The white wine of St. Peray is dry, spirituous, and brisk, with an agreeable flavour resembling the odour of the violet; when made effervescent, it nearly equals Champagne, though of less lightness, delicacy, and softness. It is in much request in Holland, Belgium, and Germany.

3. The eastern region is formed principally of the valley of the Saône, whence come the best products of this part of France. The districts of Beaujolais, the Mâconnais, and the Chalonnaise yield delicate, light, well-flavoured, but not high-coloured wines, which are principally consumed in the interior, and form little or no portion of foreign traffic. In Upper Burgundy, on the contrary, those of the Côte d'Or, so named on account of the richness of the vineyards, are the most famous of their class, and have great value both at home and abroad. Here grow the renowned Chambertin, Beaune, Nuits, Pomard, Volnay, Romanée-Conti, Clos Vougeot, and La Tache, to the excellence and perfection of which the pre-eminence of this province is mainly due. The white kinds in most repute are those of Montrachet, paramount in fragrant delicacy, the buoyant Meursault, and those of Blagny. In Auxerrois are the vineyards of Chablis, whose wines are in much esteem, but under that name large quantities of other growths from the neighbouring estates find their way into the market.

The produce of the Jura is characterized generally as brisk, delicate, and light, but with some acidity, attributable to bad cultivation and a careless mixture of the vines. From the Jura are also derived some rose-coloured wines, and the luscious *vin de Garde du Château Chalons*, which requires to be kept twelve or fifteen years in the cask, and then sells at 3 to 5 francs the litre. The products both of Alsace and Lorraine are very common, poor in quality, and seldom exported. This region further embraces the department of the Marne, whose wines known as Champagne have a world-wide reputation, and form one of the chief products of the kingdom. Lightness, flavour, transparency, piquancy, and every excellence of the finest descriptions are united in them. They are divided into four varieties, — sparkling, sparkling granot, demi-mousseux, and tisane de Champagne, and sell, according to quality, from 3½ to 6½ francs the bottle on the spot. In good seasons Champagne produces not less than fifteen million bottles of white wine, but the average yield is about half that quantity.

4. The five departments which compose the central region are the Loiret, Cher, Nièvre, Allier, and Puy de Dôme. The vintages here are inferior in quality, but blend well with more spirituous sorts, and are much used in Paris for that purpose. The only growth worth mention is that of Pouilly, which is in much esteem as a choice dinner wine. It bears a fragrant bouquet, drinks soft and agreeable, is distinguished for its nutty flavour, and in good years will often compare with vintages of much higher pretension. It is said to dispel the languor of over-fatigue and other depressing influences, and to gently stimulate a flagging or exhausted appetite.

5. In the south-western division of France, although the culture of the vine is pursued extensively, the only sections presenting any feature of particular mark are those of the Gironde and Jurançon. The wines of the former are far from being uniform in quality, notwithstanding they possess a common origin, and all pass under the same general denomination. In commerce they are divided into five chief classes,—Médoc, De Graves, De Côtes, Palus, and Entre Deux-mers, the first four only possessing any claim to high repute. The “*grands vins*” of Médoc are composed of five grades. The first rank comprises only the three celebrated growths of the Châteaux Margaux, Lafitte, and Latour: the former, less powerful perhaps than the others, has a refined delicacy and rich flavour which have gained it eminence and priority. The “vins de Graves” are those grown in the plains around Bordeaux; the name is derived from the soil, which is chiefly composed of small gravel or pebbles called *graves*, or *gravier*: fuller, richer coloured, and more generous than those of neighbouring communes, they carry a dry, flinty taste, and an aroma somewhat resembling clover. The white varieties of Médoc have a universal reputation. Those of Sauterne, Beaumes, and Barjac are fine, limpid, delicate, and much in demand abroad. “Vins de Côtes” is the name given to those raised on the left bank of the Garonne, of which the best known is St. Emilion. The Palus wines, grown in the moist sands of the Gironde, are very high-coloured and vinous, but being deficient in body and briskness, are of little import compared with the preceding. The plantations of Bergerac, in the Dordogne, furnish samples of high quality, and even in the sterile territory of the Landes, remarkable for its vast

plains of ocean sands driven from the sea-shore by the winds over a naturally fertile soil, a common sort is produced, which is consumed entirely by its inhabitants. The wines of Jurançon, in the Basses-Pyrénées, are the most famous of this part of the south of France. The superior white kinds are strong, generous, and well-flavoured. The red wines of Gaillac are in great demand in commerce. Being very full in colour, strong, and spirituous, they are well adapted for the mixing which takes place in the *entrepôt* of Bordeaux. Médoc wines are sent to all parts of Europe, but chiefly to England, Holland, and Russia: the first growths, little known in France, are reserved for this country, but before exportation are dashed with Hermitage, or other generous sorts. The grapes here are picked off the stems before they are placed in the wine-press,—a process fast superseding the ancient custom of crushing the fruit with the feet, which is now deservedly falling into disuse.

6. The western region, not very remarkable for its wines, is one of the richest parts of France, in consequence of its extensive manufacture of brandy. The two departments lying on the banks of the Loire, Indre, and Maine, although possessing numerous vineyards, are of little importance as compared with the Charente. The principal growths,—Joué, Bourgueil, Vouvray, and the white wine of Jaumur, are sent to Paris and Belgium only, while the Cognac brandy is esteemed and sought after by all Europe. Of the vine-grounds in the Charente only one-third are cultivated for wine, the rest being reserved for the fabrication of brandy. More than two million hectolitres are annually devoted in Annis, Saintonge, and Angoumois to distillation, yielding 4 to 500,000 hectolitres of spirits, and from 40 to 50,000,000 francs in value.

Brandy gains value from age, though it loses strength, especially if kept in too warm a place. One-year old brandy is called *new*; from one to three years old it is known as *rassises* (stale or mature); and from the fourth year it is considered *old*. Besides the age and potency of the spirit, the soil, the quality and richness of the wine from which it was drawn, and the management of the fire under the still, are material elements in determining the excellence of brandy; and so strongly marked is the spirit with the flavour of the wine from which it was produced, that persons of experience can always tell from what district it comes, as well as from what species of grape.

The reclamation from France of the department of the Rhine and Moselle gave to Germany the greater part of the wines grown on the latter river. Two varieties continue to be raised in the vicinity of Metz, but the quality is inferior. At Château Salins, in old Lorraine, there is a species of vine called *liverdun*, whose properties are singular, and its bearing enormous. If the buds are injured by spring frosts, it is observed to put them forth anew, and yet the grape reaches maturity in due time. The quantity of juice given out by its fruit is immense, often amounting to one hundred hectolitres per hectare. This would seem almost incredible, and yet is within the truth, the mean produce being nearer a hundred and twenty than to one hundred.

The annual value of the French vintage, as estimated by the Minister of Commerce, may be taken, at $6\frac{1}{2}d.$ per gallon, as somewhat over £25,000,000 sterling, and the product at nearly 1,000,000,000 gals., of which about 120,000,000 are distilled into brandy. The total amount of wine and spirits exported in 1823


exceeded three millions sterling,—a large contribution for a country which, notwithstanding the drawback of considerable tracts of sterile as well as forest lands and defective practical husbandry, produces corn besides for a growing population thirty-six millions in number.

The grape blight first showed itself in France in the year 1850, when it infested some of the vineyards in the vicinity of Paris. In 1851 it extended its destructive course throughout the kingdom, attaining its maximum of virulence in 1854, from which time may be dated the decrease of the distemper, and consequent improvement of the vintages of subsequent seasons. The amount of loss sustained from its ravages can hardly be estimated, but the direful effects of the visitation were painfully manifest, and much apprehension prevailed as to its permanent influence on the future of the grape. The immediate results were the destruction of a multitude of vines, a reduction of the wine harvest to one-fifth of its usual average, and the compulsion on the part of France, for the first time in her history, to become an importer of wine from the adjacent peninsula, and of spirits from the island of Great Britain.



SECTION VIII.

The Wines of Germany and Switzerland.

N the remoter periods of European civilization the geographical position of Germany presented formidable obstacles to the plantation and successful culture of the vine in that country. Various epochs have been assigned for its introduction, and while some go so far back as the Asiatic Bacchus, others are content to ascribe the first plantings to the Emperor Probus, himself the son of a gardener, who about the year 280 directed the replantation of the vine in western Europe, where for nearly two centuries its culture had been prohibited by his predecessors. That no vineyards existed at the period when Tacitus wrote his description of that country is manifest, for he asserts that the soil was unpropitious to every sort of fruit tree,—the usual beverage of the people being a kind of beer procured from wheat or barley, and foreign wines only to be met with in the neighbourhood of the greater rivers. Whether, in the course of the two following centuries, the climate could have undergone sufficient amelioration to allow of this species of culture seems very doubtful, but it is not unlikely that the Germans derived the first vines from their Roman conquerors. Be that as it may, there has been sufficient improvement in temperature to admit of a free growth of the grape even beyond the line assigned for its successful propagation in France. Whoever has visited

the Rhine must have felt sensible of the present beauty of its vineyards overlaying steep and shore, interlaced with romantic ruins, towns ancient and venerable, smiling villages; and the rapid broad German river reflecting the rich scenery on its banks. Nowhere is the fondness for vine-cultivation more evident, in every grade and class, than in the German wine districts. The humblest peasant has his square yard of vinery; every accessible spot on the declivities is decorated with the benignant plant; landscapes of greater beauty and luxuriance are elsewhere seldom seen. From Bonn to Coblentz, and from thence to Mayence, the country is clothed with a picturesque verdure, and it is between the two latter places that all the finest produce of Germany is grown. On both sides of the river extensive plantations abound, yielding a profusion of serviceable wines, supporting a numerous population, and lending an air of animation and fertility to the scene, which forms an agreeable contrast to the ruins and vestiges of feudal grandeur that crown the prominent heights. The choicest vintages, however, are confined to a small portion of the Rheingau, extending for nine or ten miles on the right bank of the river, from a little below Mentz to Rüdesheim; but the produce of some of the vines above Mentz, particularly of those at Hochheim on the banks of the Mayne, is usually classed with the best Rhine wines, being of nearly equal excellence.

The climate of some parts of Germany is milder than its geographical position might at first lead us to expect. Except the Alps, none of its mountains rise to the snow-line, and a great portion of the north-western provinces opening well to the sea, profits by the mild western breezes that commonly prevail. The valley of the

Rhine, too, being deeply sunk between hilly ranges of great elevation, enjoys a fine and salubrious atmosphere of a high annual temperature, with a mild winter and a summer not too hot,—incidents highly conducive to the perfection of the grape. The vinous productions of Germany may be considered as constituting a distinct order by themselves, and are distinguished by a delicacy of flavour and aroma, which it would be scarcely possible to appropriately describe. Of late years, unceasing attention has been bestowed on their tillage, and by judicious improvements, and a better manipulation of the details, they are greatly advanced in quality. Some of them have what the French call the *goût de pierre*; but as the soils are very various, so no two growths exactly resemble each other, even to a taste not over fastidious. The vintage does not commence until the grapes are more than fully mature,—indeed, until they begin to shrivel from over ripeness, and are on the verge of decay. They are then carefully gathered, and the imperfect berries separated and put aside with the stalks and other leafy surplus. The more celebrated of these wines, after being fermented in separate casks and repeatedly racked, are suffered to remain in huge vats, to perfect by time. Until three or four years old they seldom get in fine condition; the flavour and bouquet are not developed in less time, nor will they sooner bear transport. They mellow best in large vessels; hence the renowned Heidelberg tun, 31 feet long by 21 feet high, and holding six hundred hogsheads; it is neatly embellished with all kinds of fantastic devices. Tübingen, Grünigen, and Königstein could all boast of their enormous tuns, the latter being capacious enough to store 3709 hogsheads. As their white wines were con-

sidered to mature better thus than in casks of ordinary dimensions, they were usually kept carefully filled. The Germans ever had credit for being excellent toppers, and of taking care of "the liquor they loved," of which these huge reservoirs may be regarded as no unapt semblance.

It is commonly supposed in this country, that the wines of the Rhine and Moselle are naturally acid; the inferior kinds may often be so, but this is not their constant character. In favourable seasons they are free from acidity; in bad seasons they contract an excess of malic acid, and are consequently liable to the attendant imperfections. Hence the vintages secured in warm and dry summers, such as 1811, or the "year of the comet" as it is sometimes called, are always in great demand, and fetch exorbitant prices. Their chief distinction, however, is their extreme durability, in which they are not surpassed by any other species of wine. While strong southern growths suffer from age after a certain period in bottle, Rhenish wines seem endowed with inextinguishable vitality: formerly they had no place at the tables of the wealthy before they were nearly, if not quite, fifty years old. They are drunk from green-tinted glasses, as thin almost as paper, which it is thought imparts to the draught a greater zest, yet seeming to the stranger almost too fragile to contain the liquid. It occasionally happens, in the depth of winter, that new wine gets frozen. To recover it, racking into sulphured casks is the usual remedy, with the addition of a little spirit. It is the aqueous portion of the wine that congeals. This furnished winegrowers with a hint, which they were not slow in adopting; viz. to expose their wine to a frost strong enough

to solidify a good portion of the watery part, and then rack off the residue, which is found to be improved both in body and flavour.

As the growths of Germany contain little more than half the quantity of alcohol usually found in Madeira wine, and as this amount is often reduced by long keeping so low as 7 or 8 per cent., it is evident that the conservative power does not reside in the spirituous property of these liquors. Their dryness proves that the saccharine matter, which is seldom in great abundance in the Rhenish grape, has been fully decomposed, and from their brightness it may be inferred that the superfluous leaven has been entirely precipitated. It is to the presence of a large proportion of tartaric acid, not easily separated, that we may look for their chief preservative quality. Even in some of the stronger and more perfect kinds, as Sherry and Madeira, a slight deposit is perceptible when kept long in bottle; but their ample fermentation and abundant alcohol ensure them from any further change. With most light wines, however, this is not the case. Their feebleness will not admit the deposit of any portion of the tartar without risking their total ruin; but in Rhenish wines not even the evaporation occasioned by long keeping in the wood is sufficient to derange the affinities. The proportion of alcohol, doubtless, is sensibly diminished, and the wine becomes more tart than before; yet this acidity is still very distant from vinegar, and by no means ungrateful to the palate, whilst the colour is heightened, and the peculiar fragrance and flavour are more fully developed. Professor Liebig, in his analytical investigations, attributes the fulness of their bouquet to the action of the free acid in which all German wines abound, and he is

decidedly of opinion that it is from the tartar they contain that they derive their most valuable hygienic properties. Acids, however, are said to generate gout, and on that account German wines in England are forbidden to patients subject to that disease; this, probably, is but a vulgar error, for the gout is a malady rarely known on the banks of the Rhine, where hardly any other wine is in use. In certain calcareous complaints, and in severe attacks of calculus and other urinary affections, the light and pure wines of Germany have been resorted to with extraordinary benefit, and it is a proverb with the natives that "good Hock keeps off the doctor." And so, we may suppose, thought the laureate Southey when, referring to a summer's ramble in Germany, he wrote, "Certain it is that the continued exercise, change of air, and excitement agreed admirably with me, to say nothing of the wine, which every where about the Rhine is the true Amreeta, and deserves to be called the 'liquor of Life;' . . . and so Pindar would have said if he had ever tasted it."—*Select Letters*, iii. 74.

The whole eastern bank of the Rhine, called the Rheingau, has been remarkable for its wines during many centuries. It was once the property of the church, and extends from a little below Mentz to Rüdesheim, including a space of rather more than nine miles in length by about four in breadth. The entire district is a delightful vine garden. Foremost in character, on a crescent hill of red soil, stands the far-famed Johannisberger, which is indebted for its celebrity to the high flavour and perfume peculiar to its produce, with the advantage of entire freedom from acidity. The quantity manufactured is not large. This vineyard was first planted by the monks of the abbey of Johannisberg,

and is now the property of Prince von Metternich. The soil is composed of the *débris* of various-coloured stratified marl: the grapes are gathered as late as the season will permit. Of the choicer samples the portion permitted to come into the market is very small; but some of the growth at the foot of the hill is always to be had, and even this is preferable in point of quality to most of the neighbouring vintages, and bears a corresponding price. Next to this in rank may be placed the produce of the Steinberg vine. It is the strongest of all the Rhine wines, and possesses much softness and delicacy of flavour. Some persons give the preference to Rüdesheimer, which contains a high flavour with much body, and is freer from acerbity than most other growths. The rock here, consisting of micaceous schist, is in many places entirely denuded; and the acclivity so steep as to necessitate the formation of a considerable portion into terraces, which are kept covered with a sufficient quantity of vegetable mould and dressing, carried up in baskets. The site presents a favourable exposure, which allows the grapes to ripen fully, and to this may be partly attributed the eminence it has attained. Gräfenberg, once the appanage of the wealthy convent of Eberbach, produces very choice wine, which carries a price equal to the Rüdesheimer; whilst Marcobrunner and Rothenberg afford other varieties prized for their smooth and delicate aroma.

The Hochheimer is, strictly speaking, a Mayne wine. The town itself stands in the midst of vineyards, and from its name is derived the appellation Hock, a term too commonly applied in England to all of German origin. Most of the other growths of the Upper and Lower Rhine can only be classed with first-rate ordinary

kinds, and the Moselle wines, except in very propitious seasons, generally fall into the same rank: the most celebrated is the Brauneberger, and the varieties raised near Treves are numerous. A Dutch merchant, in 1793, is said to have paid the abbey of Maximus, for a vintage called Gruenhäuser, no less than 1144 florins for 290 English gallons in the vat. This wine was formerly known as the "Nectar of the Moselle." In its use it was said to seldom elevate persons above the point of cheerfulness, even after pretty deep potations, and proved quite innocuous the next day, as it left the head and system free from nausea or disorder. Being light and dry, of a pleasant flavour and high aroma, the better sorts of Moselle have been regarded with partiality in this country; but they sometimes contract a slaty taste, from the strata on which they grow. Those of the sparkling class possess many agreeable properties, and of that character are the wines of Scharzofberg, Josephshofer, and some others; but they are entirely wanting in the delicious aroma that belongs to the *vins mousseux* of France, for that distinctive property is derived from the soil, which no art can substitute. Besides, there is an immense difference between the Rhenish kinds and those of Champagne, for the grape of the former, to be really good, requires the fullest maturity, even to a rotten state, whilst the latter does not admit of the fruit being more than freshly ripe; consequently, the good properties secured to Rhenish produce by so protracted a vintage are for the most part lost when applied to the formation of an effervescing wine.

The red wines of the Rhine inherit little or no superiority over the white varieties. The Asmannhäusern

perhaps is the best, and will compare favourably with some of the favourite growths of France. Königsbach, on the left bank of the river, Kesseling, Altenahr, and some others, furnish red sorts of fair average quality. The Liebfrauenmilch, a stout and full-flavoured wine, grown near Worms, is said to owe its superiority over the produce of neighbouring vineyards to the shelter afforded by the elevated walls of the hôtel-de-ville. The importance of protection against bleak currents and other disturbance of the atmosphere is well understood in the Rheingau, for the belts of vineyards that cover the heights of that locality produce wines varying considerably in flavour and quality, according to their respective advantages of position.

Of the remaining Rhenish wines there are few that call for particular notice. The Germans themselves say, "Rhine wine good; Neckar pleasant; Frankfort bad; Moselle innocent." The banks of the Neckar, indeed, yield a red sort of tolerable character and bouquet; but as we advance further south the vintages degenerate, and in the Austrian states the wines are nearly all of inferior quality, being sharp, and often very acid. Nevertheless, from long use the natives prefer them to any others, and even consider their tartness a criterion of excellence. The better kinds of German produce are, perhaps, the most wholesome in the world, and the golden wine of the "father river" fully deserves its altar to Bacchus.

In BAVARIA the celebrated "Stein" wines are grown in considerable abundance, and are held in much favour in the north of Europe for their agreeable aroma and potency. Of these the Rieslinger ranks the highest. It is grown on a hill of considerable elevation, sold very

dear, and called "wine of the Holy Spirit" by the hospitallers of Würzburg, to whom it belongs. At the royal palace an immense quantity is kept always in store in the vast cellars of the Bavarian monarch.

Running through the Alpine mountain range, with its icy glaciers and peaks of perpetual snow, SWITZERLAND might have fairly claimed exemption from all allegiance or participation in the culture of the vine, or adding in any degree to the general store of its exhilarating produce; such a barren issue, however, does not prove to be the fact, and her contribution to the vinous commonwealth is neither sparse nor useless. With every disadvantage of her northern latitude, she is yet equal to the production of a good and wholesome beverage in sufficient quantity to meet the requirements of her own people, with somewhat even to spare. The wine of Switzerland in most repute is raised in the canton of the Grisons: it has an aromatic flavour, is white from a red grape, and known as Chiavenna wine. At Sierre, in the Valais district, they make a Malvasia also of good quality, and both are of the luscious kind. The white Yvorne of Bex is likewise held in much esteem. The best red varieties of the valley of the Rhône are grown at Viesch (pronounced *visp*,) and at Sion. The former, called Salquener, and obtained from a small black grape in the vale of Zermatt, is a pleasant wine, of good body, flavour, and bouquet; its familiar appellation is *vin d'enfer*, and its German name is Salgetsch. The Sion variety, called Baliot, is but little inferior in character or quality, and the produce of La Marque and Amigny, in the commune of Martigny, is of good reputation.

Red wine in much abundance, and of tolerable quality, is grown at Schaffhausen. At Basle they make the

“wine of blood,” so named from the combat of Birs, in the reign of Louis XI., when sixteen hundred Swiss contended with thirty thousand French : of the former only sixteen survived, more dying from fatigue and exhaustion than by the arms of their foes. The canton of Vaud yields the largest quantity, and the vintage near Lausanne resembles the dry wines of the Rhine in quality, and will keep well. The red of Berne is good ; that of Neuchâtel equal only to third-class Burgundy, the climate being too cold to furnish any of superior quality. In many places around Geneva the vine is cultivated chiefly for the supply of grapes for table use.

The growths of the Valteline are sound, of good quality, and remarkable for their durability. A very generous wine is also made in this district from the red grape, which is suffered to hang on the vine till November. When thus fully matured, it is gathered, taken to a large store-room, and hung up by the stems for several weeks. The bunches are then carefully examined, and every decayed or injured berry is thrown aside, so that none but sound fruit is reserved for the press. The wine so made is remarkably luscious, with great strength, and will keep well for a century. The Swiss, when their wine is a year old, bore a hole two-thirds of the way up the head of the cask, drink it down to the tap, and then refill it with the new vintage, by which the latter is much improved and earlier matured.



SECTION IX.

The Wines of Italy, Sardinia, and Sicily.

SO beneficial to this life has the vine been esteemed in all ages, that ardent votaries have never been wanting who believe that the happiness of the one consists in the enjoyment of the other.

“In vite hominis vitam esse diceres.”—*Ovid.*

Yet they do not sufficiently reflect, perhaps, that if wine be “the cradle of life,” it may, by excess, become “the grave of reason;” for if men will constantly sail in “the red sea of the Tuscan grape,” their minds are often drowned, even whilst fondly imagining themselves above the pale of mortality. Although too devoted an allegiance to the vine is thus pernicious, and from it often come more faults than grapes, yet what cherishes the heart of man so much as wine? What more delightfully refreshes the spirits and the mind, exhausted by toil and care, than that natural nectar,—that divine medicine, which abates our griefs, mitigates our sorrows, and inspires the countenance with happy and smiling cheerfulness?

“Tunc dolor et curæ, rugaque frontis abest.”—*Id.*

The vinous products of modern Italy are both numerous and of varied excellence; yet, notwithstanding the sterling advantages of a benignant clime and congenial soil, it has not succeeded in maintaining the signal distinction which its early fame might have induced us to expect; and it but too frequently happens, that where Nature is most

bountiful, man becomes remiss and unmindful of her gifts, and ceases to improve the benefits bestowed upon him according to his means and ability. In more northern regions the utmost precaution and skill are employed to protect the vine from the injury of a low temperature and excess of humidity; but in Italy, where it springs up almost spontaneously, and an early summer secures the full maturity of its fruit, but little labour and attention are necessary to produce an abundant crop. Hence the vines that attach themselves to the fences or trees that bound his fields commonly supply the needy vintager with a beverage sufficient to satisfy his homely wants. Mr. Forsyth, in his able and interesting *Excursion in Italy*, when describing the beauty of the autumnal scenery, remarks, "The vintage was now in full glow. Men, women, children, asses, all were variously engaged in the work. I remarked in the scene a prodigality and negligence which I never saw in France. The grapes dropped unheeded from the panniers, and hundreds were left unclipped on the vine." Yet the peasant-cultivators generally are not an idle or unthrifty race; but the fair reward of labour has long been wanting, and the stimulus and interests of external commerce have not yet interposed to impel an active desire for improvement, whilst the vexatious and impolitic restrictions of petty principalities, by which the internal traffic has for generations been curtailed and trammelled, compel the people to remain content with their own imperfect and slovenly system.

If appearance alone were consulted, the bald and stunted vines of Burgundy or Champagne must yield to the more exuberant growths of Italy, where, for the most part, they are allowed to send forth their foliage

full and unbroken; and their branches, entwining round each other, and occasionally forming festoons from tree to tree, contribute to variegate and adorn the landscape.

'Tis harvest time. "The vines in light festoons
From tree to tree, the trees in avenues,
And every avenue a covered walk.
Hung black with clusters. 'Tis enough to make
The sad man merry, the benevolent one
Melt into tears, so general is the joy." — ROGERS' *Italy*.

In this happy season scores of peasants in their party-coloured attire may be seen plucking the grapes with laughter and jest, and heaping them into deep baskets, till the purple clusters loll over the edge wet with the bursting juice. Some are mounted on ladders to reach the highest, some on foot below gathering the lowest, and the luscious-laden panniers are borne off on the head to a great basket wain, into which they are carelessly tumbled together. When the grapes are all gathered, they are heaped into capacious stone vats. The merry villagers, crowned with vine-leaves and bare-legged to their thighs, now leap in, and with joke and song tread down the grapes, whose rich juice flows out into a huge butt below: as they crush them down, new heaps are added, and it is no small task to keep them under. The juice spurts over them in crimson blotches,—the perspiration streams from their forehead,—they pant with exertion and excitement,—and as they brush aside their dank dark locks, streak their faces purple. When tired out by this fatiguing work, others take the vacant places, and so the dance goes on until the richest juice is expressed and conveyed to the reservoir.

The ordinary management of the Italian vineyards is in many respects very faulty: it often occurs that the vines are planted in corn land, and corn is grown

where the vines ought to be. The peasant-farmer, having but little ground and still less capital, does not look beyond the quickest return, and that which comes most immediately within his slender means, for small is his expenditure in providing proper vats, casks, and other cellar implements, the want of which is much felt in Italy. In spite of every error in culture, the growth of grapes in ordinary seasons is immense, vast quantities being raised subsidiary to other purposes than wine; whilst the great superiority of climate might still ensure a high rank to Italian produce,

“ Were they content to prune the lavish vine
Of straggling branches, and improve the wine.”—*Dryden*.

But on such points the ignorance, the obstinacy, and the slovenly indolence of the natives are almost incredible; and, unhappily, the quality of the wine is almost always in the inverse ratio of profuse expansion.

In particular districts of Italy, however, it is by no means rare to meet with good wine, and as in many instances both care and industry are exercised in its management, the ancient fame of its vinous produce may yet emerge from the common darkness that for ages has enshrouded the land; for shall it be forgotten whence came the nectar of which Anacreon used to sing? or where grew the grapes for the vintages so lovingly painted in Virgil? If Italy could produce superlative wines in the times of Augustus, why not now, with an undiminished sun and unimpaired soil, and every modern appliance to boot? Verily, to this desirable end freedom alone is wanting,—freedom of thought and freedom of action,—for the dawn of a brighter future is already responding to the aspirations of an ardent and intellectual people. The oppression

of a foreign yoke and of domestic exaction are chargeable with much of the existing evil; the Italians are sensibly alive to their recent abject condition, no less than to the advantages of industrial commerce, and would soon apply themselves to amend a faulty system, were they permitted to reap a fitting reward.

From this general censure on Italian apathy and misrule Tuscany deserves to be excepted, where the culture is much better conducted than in any neighbouring state. This lovely province is one continuous vineyard and olive ground. What would in England be fields and common hedges, are here a mass of orchards, producing wine and oil in rich abundance. The luxuriant vines of her soil are nearly all of the high training, and considerable care is bestowed on the manufacture. The hill wines only are good, the growth of the plains being generally regarded as poor. A red muscadine is produced in the highest perfection at Montepulciano, and one or two other localities; it is of a brilliant purple colour, with a luscious aromatic flavour, yet in nowise cloying or distasteful, as its sweetness is tempered with an agreeable sharpness and astringency. The rocky hills of Chianti, near Sienna, furnish another sort of red wine, which is made from a different grape, equally sweet, but rather less aromatic, the produce of a creeping kind of vine; and at Artimino an excellent Claret is grown. The wine of Carmignano can boast a gay name in olden times, and still maintains a deserved rank in popular esteem.

Tuscany has been ever considered the country of the vine in Italy, and so much has the notion been cherished by its people, that "*Corpo di Bacco!*" is the common expletive of the lower classes. Redi, too, a celebrated

Italian poet, and court physician to the Grand-dukes of Tuscany in the seventeenth century, in his exquisite poem of *Bacco in Toscana*, depicts with graphic effect the fervent love of his countrymen for the product of the vine. This extravaganza is a free and lively outburst of animal joyousness, improvised, as it were, to an hilarious dancing measure in a true Bacchanalian spirit. As poetry invariably suffers by transmutation into any foreign tongue, it would be somewhat difficult to convey in an English dress a just conception of the sparkling vivacity these verses display,—a difficulty enhanced by the national objects and associations interwoven with the subject, no less than by the little cognizance of Tuscan wines held in this country. As the poem, however, is regarded as one of the wittiest and most popular of Italian literary gems, the following detached passages may serve to awaken interest for a production awarded so large a share of local celebrity; nor, peradventure, will it lose favour in the estimation of the intelligent reader, should he be able to discern in these rollicking stanzas the model suggestive of the playful freedom displayed in the *Don Juan* of Lord Byron, or in the *Hyperion* of Longfellow, but constitute the best apology for this digression.

The poet, it may be premised, feigns that Bacchus, accompanied by Ariadne, in taking his divine circuits around the globe, comes and seats himself on the lawn before the Grand-ducal mansion in the vicinity of Florence. He demands to know how the Tuscan wines go on. They are served up to him: he tastes, he criticises, and pronounces between the several varieties presented for his judgment. He drinks deeper, becomes elevated, and abandons himself to the passing joy and excitement.

" Oh, boys ! this Tuscan land divine
 Hath such a natural gift of wine,
 We'll fall, we'll fall
 On the barrels and all ;
 We'll fall on the must, we'll fall on the presses,
 We'll make the boards groan with our vivid caresses.
 No measure, I say ; no order,—but riot ;
 No waiting nor cheating ; we'll drink like a Sciot.
 Drink ! drink ! drink again when you've done ;
 Pledge it merrily till joy you have won.
 Frisk it, and challenge it, swallow it down ;
 He that's afraid is a thief and a clown.
 If Signor Bellini, besides his wild apes,
 Would anatomize vines, and anatomize grapes,
 He'd see that the heart which engenders good wine,
 Is formed to do good, and very benign.

When I drink freely, I rise
 Above the Mount of poets wise,
 And in my voice and in my song
 Grow so sweet and feel so strong,
 I Phœbus challenge with his Delphic strains ;
 For songs can I sing more moving and fine
 Than the bubbling and quaffing of Gersolé wine.
 Then the rote shall go round, and the cymbals kiss,
 And I'll praise Ariadne, my beauty, my bliss !

True son of the earth is Chianti wine,
 Born on the ground of a gipsy vine ;
 Born on the ground for sturdy souls,
 And not the lank race of your garden poles.

Like a bold king
 In his conquering,
 Chianti wine with his red flag goes
 Down to my heart, and down to my toes ;
 He makes no noise, and beats no drums,
 Yet pain and trouble fly as he comes.
 Still with a good bottle of Carmignan,
 He, of the twain, is the merrier man ;
 He brings from heav'n such a fill of joy,
 I envy not Jove his ambrosia, my boy.

Cups of chocolate, or fragrant tea,
 Are not compounds made for me ;

Nor that bitter and dirty stuff, ye
 Praise so glibly, and term it coffee;
 So, for a liquor so dark and unseemly,
 With the Grand Turk I differ extremely.
 And the dolt who drinks water, I freely observe,
 Gets nothing from me: he may swill and may starve.
 Whether from well, or flowing from fountain,
 Or whether it comes foaming white from the mountain,

I cannot admire it,
 Nor ever desire it;
 He's a fool or a madman, an impudent wretch,
 Who could think ever to thrive in a noisome ditch.
 Let the dark Moslem and fierce Mameluke
 Praise Nile's fertile waters exempt from rebuke;
 Let the proud Spaniard exult in his Tagus,
 I will have neither, nor permit even negus.
 Away with all water wherever I come,
 I forbid it my people, the old and the young;
 Of lemonade water,— of jessamine water
 Our tavern knows nothing;— water's a hum!

All your hydromels and flips
 Come not near these cautious lips.

But a truce to vain pretences!
 Or I shall lose my senses.
 Let me purify my mouth
 In a cup of the rosy south;
 In a golden pitcher let me
 Deeply plunge and comfort get me,
 And drink of the wine

Of the vine
 So benign,
 That sparkles warm in Sansovine.

Meanwhile let's renew our drinking;—
 But with *what* fresh wine and glorious
 Shall our beaded brims be winking,
 For an echoing toast victorious?
 You know Lamporecchio, the castle crown'd?
 There's a topaz made there, pray send it round;
 Serve, serve me a dozen,
 But let it be frozen,—
 Let it be frozen and garnish'd with ice,
 And see that the same be as virginly nice

As the coldest that whistles from wintry skies :
Coolers and cellarets, crystal with snows,
Should always hold bottles in ready repose.

Bring me heaps
Of all that sleeps

On every village hill and valley,
For weak is the brain, and I verily scout it,
That thinks in hot weather to drink wine without it.
Then bring me ice daily, and bring it me doubly,
Out of the grotto of Monte di Boboli :

With adze and pickaxes,
Hammers and rammers,
Thump it and hit it me,
Crack it and crash it me,
Hew it and split it me,
Pound it and smash it me,

Till the whole—(for I'm dead dry, I think !)
Turns cold enough to freshen my drink.

Good wine is ever a gentleman,
He aideth digestion all that he can ;
No headach hath he, no heartburn I say,
For those who talk'd with him but yesterday.

Wine, wine ! is your only drink !
Grief never dares to look at the brink.
And should any disciple of mine
Dare sullenly frown on his wine,

Or partake of a globule of water,
Here's the hand that will give him to slaughter ;
Full six times in a year to be mad with wine
I hold in no shame, but a very good sign.
For me, I daily indulge in my can,
To fulfil the part of a gentleman ;
And doing thus, I can boldly defy
The hail and snow of a freezing sky.

I never go poking

Or croaking, when cloaking
And wrapping myself from head to foot,—
As some people do,—hat and wig to boot.

Fill, then, fill ! let us have our will !
But with what—with *what*, boys, shall we fill ?

Fill me the manna of Monte Pulciano ;—
 Heav'ns ! it glides to my heart by the sweetest of roads
 Oh ! how it kisses me,—tickles me,—lovingly bites me !
 And now my eyes loosen all sweetly in tears !
 Then hearken, all earth ! and listen, ye drinkers !
 All who reverence Bacchus, and are noble thinkers !
 Give ear, and have faith in this edict divine,
 ‘ *Monte Pulciano's the king of all wine !* ’

At these inspiring sounds
 The Nymphs in mazy rounds,
 Shaking their ivy diadems and grapes,
 Echo the triumph in fantastic shapes.
 The Satyrs would fain have join'd them ; but, alas !
 They couldn't ; for they lay about the grass
 As drunk as apes.”

Bacchus is now fairly intoxicated, and then ensues a passage which, although much admired in Italy, it is scarcely possible to do justice to in English. The head of the deity begins to turn : he thinks there is an earthquake, and calls out for a boat. His thickened speech becomes divided between Ariadne and the fancied boatmen. Cucurruccù (*sic in orig.*) is the burthen of a popular song, in which is imitated the voice and actions of a cock.

“ Oh ! what a sweet thing
 'Tis for you and for me,
 On an evening in spring
 To sail on the sea !
 The gentle fresh airs spread blithsome their wings,
 And flit o'er the blue surface in gay revellings ;
 To the tune of the waters, with tremulous glee,
 They strike up a dance for people at sea.

Row, brothers, row !
 We'll sail and we'll go ;
 We'll sail and we'll go till we settle in por—
 Ariadne ! in por—in port.
 Pull away, pull away,
 Without drag or delay,

No gallants grow tired, but think it a sport
To feather their oars till they settle in port—

In por—Ariadne! in port.

I'll give ye a toast,

And then, you know, you—

Arianeeny! my beauty—my queeny—

Shall sing me a little, and play to me too,

On the mandòla the coocurucoo!

The coocurucoo!

On the mandòla the coocurucoo!

Boaters never get tired, but think it a sport

To feather their oars till they settle in port—

In por—Ariadne! in port.

I'll give thee a toas—

Yes! I *will* give a toast, and then, you know, you

Shall give me one too.

Arianeeny! my quainty—my queeny!

Sing me, you ro—

Sing me, you rogue, and play to me, do,

On the vio—viòla the coocurucoo!

The coocurucoo!

On the viòla the coocurucoo!"

In this favoured province all classes, without excess, enjoy their wine freely, fancying it makes good blood. At a Tuscan villa the owner will with pride extol the vinous produce of his estate; and in Florence the nobles sell their wine by retail from their palace cellars. The phrase "flask of wine" is essentially Tuscan,—the wine being supplied to the consumer in bottles holding about three quarts, of the shape of the well-known oil vessels. When filled, a little oil is put into the neck, which effectually keeps the wine from the air: when it is to be poured out, a bit of tow is first inserted, which will absorb the oil from the surface of the wine. The vintages of Tuscany are mostly red. Formerly several white sorts were made, of which the Verdea, so called from its having a bright green tinge, was in high repute. Frederic II. of

Prussia preferred it to all other European wines ; and in the time of our James I., to have drunk Verdea is mentioned as among the boasts of a travelled gentleman. The best came from Arcetri, in the vicinity of Florence, where the wines of Carmignano, Poncino, Val di Marina, Artimino, and others of the same class, are produced, many of which are of superior quality.

In the Campagna, and in Lombardy, trellis-work and poles are both used for the support of the vines, which on the hills are dressed in terraces, and wheat sown between. From Verona to Vicenza, it is usual to plant the trees lozenge or quincunx fashion, for training purposes ; and latticed arches are adopted for most villa gardens, from which the grapes hang suspended in rich profusion. In the north, from Bassano to Trent, the valleys abound in vineyards, but the wine is too rich and luscious to be drunk by any but the inhabitants. In spots among the Apennines the vines are carefully dressed terrace-wise, and were they sufficiently pruned, and the fruit taken at due maturity, a vast deal of excellent wine might be produced. In Calabria the system of high training prevails, yet so far from this mode being prejudicial to the quality of the fruit, they are obliged to shade the vines from the sun, lest in that volcanic region the grape should become too ripe, shrivel into a raisin, and be only fit for making wine of the thickest and sweetest kind. The wines indigenous to the Papal states are for the most part low in quality. The only sorts deserving mention are those of Orvieto, and the light muscadel wines of Albano and Montefiascone. These are considered excellent by the natives ; but as they do not bear distant carriage, they are seldom met with far from home.

Piedmont and Savoy produce wines in considerable

abundance, and of very tolerable quality; those of St. Albero and Montmelian, in Savoy, are among the best in the country. The hill sides and favourable mountain slopes are mostly covered with vineyards, and hardly a province at the foot of the Alps, or along the widely spread hill of Montferrat, is without some peculiar wine of its own. The growths best known are those of Biella and Asti, the latter being both still and sparkling. A good *vin de liqueur* is made near Chamberry from a Cyprus species of vine, and an effervescing sort from the malvasia grape is grown at Lasseraz. The red of Montferrat, near Marengo, although deep-coloured and intoxicating, retains a strong hold on general esteem. Prior to the appearance of the *oidium* the red wines of Piedmont formed the ordinary beverage of the people. The price was low, and within their means; but the great havoc occasioned in some districts by the distemper so enhanced the cost, that it was put at once beyond the reach of the labouring classes, and wine became more or less an article of luxury. The immediate effect was, that the use of beer, which was disliked by the peasantry, and previously confined within narrow limits, received a sudden impulse, and the consumption, in the towns especially, increased largely. The supply for the city of Turin alone now reaches a million of gallons annually, the quality resembling, in some degree, that of Germany, whence the hops used in its fabrication are imported.

Some of the best wines of Italy are found in the vicinity of NAPLES, especially the sweet kinds that grow on the volcanic soils of Vesuvius, the principal among them being the celebrated Lacryma Christi, which is certainly entitled to rank with the superlative produce of any country. It is a red, luscious wine, better known

from its name than its use, as it is made only in small quantities, and chiefly reserved for the royal cellars. It is exceedingly rich, with an exquisite flavour, and is thought by some to be the Falernian wine of Horace; yet, from the poet's vivid description of a passing luxury, this can hardly be trusted.

The islands in the Bay of Naples all furnish wine, more or less: that of Capri is very fair in quality. At Reggio two kinds are made from the same grape, a muscadine and a dry wine. At Carigliano a sweet kind with the flavour of fennel is grown. The banks of Lake Averno produce both red and white varieties, some of which are nearly as good as those obtained from Mount Vesuvius.

In SARDINIA the vine is so productive, that the fruit is frequently left upon the branches for lack of vessels to hold the juice; yet but little effort is made to improve this opulent bounty, and the indolent apathy of the people seems uneradicable. The climate is propitious, the soil congenial and fertile; the vine and the olive, the orange and fig flourish, but the system of agriculture is wretched, and with every natural advantage in their favour, the interests of industry and commerce are strangely neglected. A few good wines, however, are produced; and among them an amber-coloured sort called Nasco, and Giro, a red variety, are the most remarkable. There are also several sweet and ordinary wines, some of which are exported to Holland and Russia.

SICILY produces wine in much abundance, but the remarks on the bad husbandry and vintage of Italy apply here in full force. The same advantages for the growth, and the same imperfections of treatment, the same errors in fermentation, and the same ignorance, obstinacy, and

inattention to cleanliness, attend the whole system. Nevertheless, many vintages maintain their ancient repute, and, contrary to what prevails in Italy, the white wines here are the more numerous, and by far the best. Within recent years the free trade carried on between England and Sicily has brought us more acquainted with the growths of the hills at the foot of Mount Etna, which may be regarded as one vast vineyard, producing a great variety of wines, according to the different soils and aspects; and no sufficient reason has as yet been assigned why nature should not here be expected to complete its own handiwork, and in the perfection of the vintage revive the reputation it so well sustained in former ages. The grape, as previously remarked, is always richest and most fertile when raised in a dry, stony soil, with much heat and but little moisture, for copious or frequent rain serves to fill the berry with a juice too aqueous for the secretion of more than a scanty portion of sugar, and wine derived from such a source is mostly weak and insipid. But on the sunny mountain side, amid volcanic boulders and accumulated *débris*, the vine strikes its attenuated fibre through the loose surface soil to the depth of several feet in search of aliment from the crevices and fissures of the rocks, while it expands its branches and leaves to be alternately warmed in the noon-day heat and refreshed by the dews of night; and proportionately with the continuance and intensity of the sun's rays, will be the ripeness and flavour of the fruit. Favoured by climate, soil, and a glowing sky, the volcanic region of Etna and Vesuvius may be regarded as one of much future promise, especially when its many natural adaptations shall be aided by human skill, energy, and amendment. At present the first

wines of the province of Mascoli grow on Etna, being almost the only good red kind met with on the island. The vineyards of the Benedictine monks in the same neighbourhood produce the wine named Terre Forte, considered to be the stoutest in all Sicily. Augusta yields a variety strongly impregnated with the flavour of violets. Over the mouldering remains of Syracuse a red muscadine is raised, equal, if not superior, to any other known. The Faro, in much repute in Sicily, is grown in the district of Messina, which furnishes a considerable quantity of wine for exportation. Marsala, when not overcharged with impure brandy, is a useful and agreeable liquor, something like Madeira of the second class, possesses considerable body, and keeps well.

A larger share of attention and traffic in Sicilian wines has arisen since the closer connexion of the island with this country; and when the true interests of proprietors and traders are better comprehended, growths may be obtained that will furnish an acceptable variety for the table, and strengthen commercial intercourse. Hitherto the Sicilian merchants, either from mistaken notions of our taste in wine, or from their cupidity, have been induced to export a number of the inferior sorts highly brandied, which no age will mellow or treatment subdue; consequently they have been looked upon with disfavour, having all the worst qualities of the worst Port and indifferent Madeira.

Elba grows a little red wine of superior quality. A hundred vines will yield from twelve to fourteen barrels on the average. The older the vine, the richer is the product: some are said to be as much as one hundred and fifty years old. The Lipari isles, too, have tolerable ordinary wines, whilst their Malmsey, raised on the


extinct volcano Stromboli, is held in wide esteem, and is nearly all exported.

Italy, although regarded as especially "the land of the sun," did not escape the ravages of that European scourge the grape-blight. Commencing its career, in 1851, from the northern portion of Piedmont, it pursued its devastating course through the Lombard, Tuscan, and other wine-producing districts, sparing not, and continued its baneful progress without much abatement through four successive years. The loss to proprietors was severe, and much distress and privation were occasioned the people by their being so long deprived of the harvest that provided them with a wholesome and economical beverage, which tradition and usage had long made for them one of the necessities of life. A curious fact was noticed as attendant on this visitation during the seasons of its greatest virulence, in the spontaneous production in common ground of an immense quantity of mushrooms, which regularly decreased as the intensity of the vine-distemper diminished.



SECTION X.

*The Wines of Hungary, Austria, and the
Crimea.*

UNGARY, as a wine-growing country, has hitherto scarcely received the consideration its importance deserves. As the innate merits of its products are considerable, and of no common order, the time cannot be far distant when their qualities will be more generally recognised, and their free import into this country welcomed as a public advantage, to which, indeed, the high cost of transit has long interposed a formidable barrier. These wines are pure, durable, abundant, and cheap; rich in flavour, aroma, and delicacy. Stronger than Rhenish, French, or even than Spanish or Portuguese unbranded samples, they are particularly well adapted for our climate, and are further endowed with other commendable properties. "Many of the Hungarian wines," remarks Mr. Graham Dunlop,* in his official government report, "are agreeable and wholesome when drunk on the spot, but they are in general made with a view merely to home or neighbouring markets, and with little or no regard to foreign consumption, or to their fitness for undergoing transport. Consequently, although the people thoroughly understand the culture and management of the grape until the vintage, their whole system of wine-making and manipulation is careless,

* British Secretary of Legation at Vienna. See *Parliamentary Report,—Secretaries of Embassies*, 1862.

wasteful, and defective, and requires improvement. I hardly think that even the best Hungarian (unbranded) wine will ever, among rich people who drink expensive wines, successfully compete in England with first quality French clarets; but if the English middle and lower classes do not take to the light acid French growths, they would certainly become large consumers of the dry, strong-bodied, clean Hungarian wines, more especially the white, and these could be supplied to them cheaper than sherries from Cadiz. The stout red wine resembling Burgundy would perfectly suit the English general market. M. de Szèmere, a short time since, made some attempts in foreign countries to introduce the Hungarian wines, for they were known then almost by reputation alone. The wine ordinarily offered abroad for sale under that name was a counterfeit or an imitation, and excessively dear. But when he produced the genuine wine and mentioned its price, people were as much astonished at its excellent flavour as at its comparative cheapness. The stocks of choice wines accumulated in the vast cellars of the principal trading towns are prodigious, not to mention the immense collection in the episcopal, chapteral, and palatial vaults, and in those of the more wealthy of the land-owning aristocracy. In Ofen and Pesth alone it is estimated that no less than 15 to 20,000,000 gallons are constantly on hand; in the manorial stores of Almáz and the Esterhazy cellars at Bay about 400,000 gallons each; at Tétény about the same, and in one depôt at Turnau nearly the double of that quantity. . . . So much has been written respecting the 'curious' and liqueur wines of Hungary, that I need scarcely enlarge on them here. They do not, in my

opinion, form an important section of the wine productions of the country, and they certainly have little to do with the English requirements for future imports. Tokay, for instance, is always an expensive and troublesome wine to make, commanding, certainly, sometimes a high fancy price, but dependent on fashion and caprice, and is easily imitated. It is to their rich, strong, dry, clean wines that the Hungarians ought to trust for the great future of their wine export commerce, and of these they would have every right to be proud. . . . I have dealt in this despatch more on the future capabilities of Hungarian wines than on their present excellences; and it behoves the English wine-merchant to encourage, in so valuable and unlimited a vineyard as Hungary is, the production of a class of wine which would be appreciated in England, and would be abundant, cheap, and wholesome."

The soil and climate of Hungary are admirably suited to a successful cultivation of the grape. Nothing can exceed the grandeur and beauty of its mountains, crowned with sheltering woods and vines of exuberant vegetation. Wherever is seen a lofty hill, there will be found a carefully-tended plantation. The superb Badacsony mountains encircle the majestic lake of Balaton, covering a surface of 125 square miles; the arid and elevated region of Mènes, or Világos, shelters the rich vales of the Bânat,—the holy Canaan of Hungary; the pyramidal mount of Tokaj, a chaotic and perdurable landmark, dominates the borders of a vast plain. It is like Vesuvius in form, and its existing yet silent crater points irresistibly to the fact that it was once a flame-consuming phenomenon. The tillage of such a locality is both troublesome and expensive,

the produce obtainable ever small; but then in the latent fire of this volcanic spot lives the peerless imperial Tokay. The territory exceeds five miles in length, and covers upwards of 60,000 acres, yielding on an average about 1,250,000 gallons of good ordinary wine, 375,000 gallons of fair or superior, and 50,000 more of superfine wine; the two latter sorts only forming a medium of external commerce, and finding their way into Germany, Poland, and Russia. In France and England there are, perhaps, scarcely a hundred bottles; the reason being that the former people fetch the wine, which the French and English omit to do, whilst the patient owners act negatively, and are content to wait till buyers come to them.

The kingdom of Hungary is a vast plain sloping to the south, and surrounded on every side by mountains of varying elevation. With some few exceptions, the vine is diligently cultivated in every county. Numberless are the gradations and character of the produce, each differing from the other in some material respect: in colour, it varies from green to yellow; in strength, it is light or generous; in taste, it is dry or sweet, with more or less of a dainty aroma. Every wine has its name, derived from a town or a county, a mountain or a lake. Next to Tokay, which is white, the most conspicuous *liqueur* wines are the red of Mènes and Eger; whilst, for light table-wines, the drier vintages of Erlaure and Ofner, and the white of Szamorodny, Bakator, Somlaure, and the Hock-rivalling Badacsony are second to none. Imperial Tokay, confessedly the true emperor of wines, has almost as mythical a character as the ancient Shiraz. The element that constitutes its chief peculiarity, its excellence, and medicinal properties, is

phosphorus, of which it contains a larger portion than any other wine in the world ; and indeed, according to the certified formulæ of Dr. W. Kletzinsky, an eminent analytical chemist of Vienna, this invaluable ingredient is largely present in all Hungarian wines. The finest Tokay is commonly thought to be the produce of one small patch of land belonging to the emperor and a few native princes, and consequently that it is hardly possible to meet with a genuine bottle in any quarter. This is so far otherwise, that the attainment need not be a matter of complex difficulty, if the requisite trouble be taken to secure it on the spot. It derives its name from the town of Tokaj, situate at the confluence of the Theyss and the Bodrog. All that is produced on the southern flank of the neighbouring volcanic mountains is called Tokay. In its cultivation the vine is allowed to reach the height of three or four feet, and is supported by stakes, as in France ; the land, which is chiefly volcanic, is dug over three times, and the plants stand half a yard apart.

The vintage in Hungary is later than any where else in Europe, as it is generally deferred till the first three weeks in November, when the weather is not only cold, but snow even has fallen,—indeed at the very last moment, just before the winter frost sets in, and at the risk of losing all ; for this primitive people are such sticklers for quality, that they would rather save none than not have the best,—their axiom being, that if the sun of summer ripens the grapes, it is the cold of autumn that perfects the wine. The central months are very hot at Tokaj, much more so than at Beaune, in Burgundy. By the middle of August the grapes are quite ripe, and so forward, that in France they would then

be gathered ; but imperial Tokay wine does not, as there, come from the must. It could not be the marvel it is, unless the grapes that produce it had been dried,—not spread out on straw, but on the vine itself,—not with the stem twisted, as has been supposed, but retaining the full flow of sap, without getting stained, blighted, or mouldy by the alternate white frosts of night and the bright autumnal sunbeams. If the season proves humid, the crop is lost ; but in Hungary the fall of the year is nearly always dry.

On the commencement of harvest operations, the vintager takes two wide-mouthed vases ; one for the bright, clear bunches, the other for the dry grapes, which he takes care to choose pink, full, and sound. The former are put into coarse canvas bags, and trampled under foot in a vat, from which the juice runs into a large receiver. That is the first juice. The bags are then emptied, and the fruit taken to the wine-press. A second and inferior juice is now expressed. These two kinds form the ordinary beverage of the community, and are seldom or never exported. To make the high-class wines they collect one hundred quarts, if possible, of dry bunches or single grapes, and put them into a barrel without a head, while a small hole, bored in the bottom, is armed with a quill or straw reed. Through this opening, with no pressure but the weight of the fruit itself, the syrupy liquor called Tokay essence is slowly exuded, drop by drop. One hundred quarts of grapes give one or two gallons of essence, according to the propitiousness of the season : the less the quantity, the better the quality. This keeps without any further preparation, and is highly valued. Little of this extract, however, is reserved by the proprietor, as it is generally used to

flavour the first-class wines; but when retained, it is left in the wood thirty or forty years before it is bottled, and is then worth 3*l.* or 4*l.* sterling the imperial pint, for original Tokay bottles seldom contain more.

After the essence has been thus extracted, the dry grapes are placed in layers in a vat of about ten litres, and well trodden by four men. This operation converts the fruit into a kind of liquid paste: it is a long and fatiguing task. It is next transferred to another vessel, about seven-eighths of which is then filled up with the must of the clear grapes. The mixture is covered over with rushes, and left to ferment for a time, varying from four-and-twenty to thirty-six hours, according to circumstances or the kind of grapes employed, to local maxims or the judgment of the proprietor, when the liquor is strained through a bag and put into barrels, which are not again opened or ever filled up. The wine, thus left to itself for two or three years, forms an abundant deposit, filling a sixth, sometimes even a quarter of the cask; but this sediment is the *nurse* of the wine, say the growers, and Germans, Poles, and Russians all take it with its lees, and double or triple their quantity of Tokay by adding other wine to the dregs. One hundred and fifty quarts of the must of the clear bunches, with thirty more of the thick juice of dry grapes, form the *one-measure* Tokay. When 60 quarts of the latter are used, it is called two-measure; when 90, three-measure; and when 120, four-measure. Essence in proportion to the quantity of thick juice used is then added to each barrel, and thus are formed the superior and high-class wines of Tokay.

When the wine is strained through a bag into the barrel it leaves a residuum, which is thrown into a vat,

and must of clear bunches poured over it; the mixture is well stirred up, left to ferment a short time, and then put into barrels *without any essence*. This is the fair middling wine, not so sweet as the others, but full-bodied, strong, and possessing a fragrant bouquet: it is named *Máslás*. Now in middling years, or when the grapes are not plentiful, or have not dried well on the vine, or are not perfect enough to make *essence*, the clear bunches and dry grapes are pressed all together, and the wine thus obtained is of much higher character than the ordinary kind, or even than the *Máslás*: this is called *Szamorodny*, and is, perhaps, the most pleasing type of all the Tokay class. Besides these graduated qualities there is also the delicious muscatel Tokay, an exceedingly scarce wine, "fit," remarks a gifted son of the soil, "to be drunk out of diamond goblets, an Olympic nectar worthy of the gods, a divine harmony of strength, sweetness, and aroma." Thus the royal wine of Hungary is made just as nature yields it, without any admixture, without warming or freezing, without brandy or sugar, without perfuming or distilling. Every year has its peculiar shade of colour, every barrel its own precise flavour and individuality. "It is, indeed," continues our animated author, "a delicious, sublime, ethereal, phosphoric, poetic liquor, of a prodigiously invigorating power, and without any excess of alcohol. I know of nothing equivalent to this wondrous volcanic transudation, or a truer vindication of the old Roman adage, *Neque vinum nisi Hungaricum*."

In Hungary, Tokay is held to be the king of white wines, as Mènes is monarch of the red. With us, the latter is still less known than his royal brother; and it may well be doubted whether a single genuine undiluted

bottle has ever crossed the frontiers. There are three kinds of Tokay wine known to foreign commerce, one-sixth of the ordinary exports being comprised of the two higher grades, and a thousand barrels or so of the secondary quality. These wines may be reckoned among the most durable of their kind. When old, the first-class become "the *beau-idéal* of liqueurs, clear as oil, thick as honey, as pungent as ether, and a grand restorative for the aged and debilitated." The highest quality has so peculiar a flavour of the aromatic kind, and is so luscious, that the taste is not easily forgotten.

The vintages of Hungary have been happily defined by a competent English traveller and connoisseur as being drier than French wines, more mellow than those of the Rhine, and more piquant than the choicest of Spain. The varieties include both red and white sorts, and form four distinct classes; viz., liqueur wines, good dry table wines, effervescent wines, and wines of local consumption. The better descriptions are principally of mountain growth; of the white, more than half have their origin in the plains. Hardly any are so light and delicate as those of Médoc, but many of them can fairly compete with the Bordeaux and Burgundies. The liqueur sorts are not the finest the country produces. It is amongst the dry, generous table wines that body and aroma are found in perfection: these are full and spirituous, and further remarkable for what is termed "rich fruity flavour," carrying at the same time an agreeable aftertaste, and exhaling a delicate evanescent fragrance. The choice white growths exhibit rather more alcoholic strength, are cleaner, drier, very exhilarating, and esteemed as being exceedingly wholesome. The effervescent wines, known as

vine-grounds, for the most part, are situated on dry sunny hill-slopes of considerable altitude. To this may be further added, what perhaps is equally essential, that the vintagers, despising the modern utilitarian heresy of preferring quantity to flavour and quality, loyally uphold the contrary doctrine, under which a favourable aspect and a congenial locality is with them an all-prevailing consideration; and the poor, light, stony, granitic ground, from whence pre-eminent wines of high character can alone be raised, is preferred to a rich and alluvial soil, where quality must necessarily be sacrificed to fecundity. Hence produce of a very low standard is uncommon in Hungary, even as applicable to the most ordinary purposes, for the practice of adding water to the murk, or other modes of dilution, is but rarely practised, and then only for the use of the vintager's own workfolk; whilst any tampering with the superior table wines is simply impossible, owing to their inimitable intrinsic characteristics. This, combined with a fixed aversion to inferiority or recession in any shape, will serve to uphold the national desire to maintain whatever perfection nature has placed at the disposal of an industrious people, and which the fertilizing influence of energy and commerce may soon call into wider action.

A questionable custom is well known to exist, of infusing brandy, more or less, in all wines destined for England. Thus the Rhine wines receive an addition of 2·5, the French 4·7, Spanish and Portuguese 8·15 per cent. of raw spirit. But, notwithstanding such adventitious aids, Rhenish produce seldom mark above 10·14 degrees of Sykes' hydrometer, and the best Clarets barely reach 18°; whereas pure and unsophisticated

Hungarian growths, when officially tested at the London Customs, exhibited the following results:—

Buda, red table wine, .	21·1	Neszmély, white table, .	19·4
Eger, do. .	21·5	Balaton do. .	20·6
Szegszárd, do. .	22·8	Bakator do. .	20·6
Mènes, 1842, do. .	23·0	Tokaj (dry) do. .	23·6

But the question of mere strength is not the sole element to be studied in respect of the wines of any particular country, and it may be proper to inquire how far natural Hungarian wine is endowed with body sufficient to bear the pressure and exigence of age. On this point the ex-Minister is very explicit, for he avers that “If there be a country where real old wines are to be found, it is Hungary. This important fact has its correlative reasons: first, from the circumstance that Hungary, like England, is a land of large estates. There are proprietors who make yearly from 1000 to 20,000 hogsheads of wine. Beautiful and enormous cellars, cut in rocky mountains, extend their dark ramification like labyrinths or catacombs, where the wines are ranged year after year. It is a kind of aristocratic and family glory to have a full and rich cellar. The grandchildren can drink the wine of their progenitors, and gratefully remember the past old times. Some owners would not sell their produce even if they could do so, but that is not always an easy matter in Hungary. Why? Because—and that is the second reason—the consumption there is very moderate. The ladies never habitually take any thing but water; the men of the upper classes are temperate from principle and habit; the lower orders from necessity and usage. Therefore, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, but little wine, and less brandy, is

consumed; so that it may be fairly said that Hungary with France, the largest wine-producing countries of the world, are at the same time two of the most temperate." But notwithstanding so much domestic abstention, foreign exports continue to be exceedingly limited. Some of their finest wines, as Tokay and Mènes, it is true, figured every where at the royal banquets of European sovereigns two centuries ago; but with the great mass suited for table use very little trade was attempted, notwithstanding the fame of Hungarian wine had penetrated far beyond where it had ever been seen or tasted. The nation continued idle or indifferent to commercial enterprise. "Rich without money," continues our author, "poor without want, the Hapsburg dynasty did nothing for a community which kept so pertinaciously to itself the sovereign right of ways and means; and I do not hesitate to affirm, that the good, natural, high Hungarian wine is yet comparatively unknown in England. The last reason which proves the existence of old wines in Hungary is, that its exportation, hitherto, having been so extremely limited, the large accumulations cannot possibly be exhausted. How much time is indispensable for bringing wines to their perfect maturity may fairly be questioned, and must remain matter of opinion, but in this respect Hungarian produce will bear the test of strict investigation. Some of Count Szirmay's Tokay of 1808, on being submitted to a careful scrutiny, proved full of ardour and flavour; so that between this wine and the growths of 1827 and 1834 no deterioration from age was perceptible, the only difference apparent being the special character appertaining to their respective years of vintage."

A sealed book as the commercial capabilities of Hungary has hitherto been, the expanded views here presented of the magnitude and importance of her natural powers of production might, perhaps, be thought somewhat overcharged, or too sanguine to be faithful, for but comparatively few persons in this country are aware of the vast store of vinous treasures subsisting in this obscure and seemingly ungenial corner of Europe; yet the novel and important facts so ably chaperoned by M. de Szèmere are by no means chimerical, and his revelations receive striking corroboration from the independent testimony of Mr. J. W. Douglas, one of the commissioners lately deputed by the English board of Customs to inquire into 'the strength and merits of the several continental wines,' who in his official report* does not hesitate to say, that "pure Hungarian wine, as an article of commerce, is actually as yet unknown in England. While possessing a great resemblance to the wines of Burgundy and the Rhine, the better sorts have greater body and strength, and would be more likely to suit the English taste; but to succeed in this country they must be imported direct from the growers, who do not adulterate their wines,—indeed they are generally so good, that they would certainly be deteriorated if alcohol were added. But the dealers dilute them with water, and this treatment has obtained for Hungarian wines a character they do not deserve. The quantity now in hand there is enormous, the previous seasons 1857-8-9 having all been fine, and the average yearly product is little short of 400 million gallons, one-third at least being available for external trade, and which could, on a progressive demand, be almost indefinitely

* *Parliamentary Return*, April 1862.

increased. At the present time I am assured, that when good seasons follow one another, so greatly is the yield in excess of the consumption, that wine is distilled, made into vinegar, or even thrown away for the sake of casks for the new crop ; and in some places corn tillage has superseded that of the vine, as paying better. Hitherto wine has not been grown by them with a view to exportation. The Hungarians, primitive, simple, and poor, are satisfied with what they can get with little trouble, and content to live from hand to mouth. There is no industrial or commercial organization ; there exists a perfect ignorance of the ways of commerce, and an indifference to the acquisition of a knowledge of them. The method of cultivation as ordinarily pursued is capable of improvement, and both manufacture and manipulation are very defective, whilst the cost of transport to distant ports and places constitutes a constant and serious obstacle. Yet, with all its disadvantages, there is probably no country in which so great a proportion of good wine is made ; and if an export trade with England were once established, there would doubtless be a general and progressive improvement in the quality of the wines transhipped, and a great stimulus supplied to the adoption of improved processes in the manufacture."

Hungarian proprietors, however, are not oppressively enterprising, and instead of seeking to create an external demand, they are content to wait till shrewder traders and merchants come to their homesteads. "Go then, stranger, and see the plantations during the busy hours of vintage ; choose the clearest and driest grapes, and decide for yourself, for the traveller is free to come and go, and do as he pleases : without invitation of any kind

he will always be welcomed by the frank-hearted villager. At all times, by night as well as in the day, hospitality is the law in Hungary; but at harvest-time the houses no longer belong to their masters. The vintage, dear to the hearts of all, is a national and universal festival, an annual and sacred jubilee, during which people forgive each other; during which all embrace, and help, and love one another. The castle on the hill and the cottage in the valley open their doors; poor and rich sit down, and drink and eat. The music hails your presence as a blessed guest: these ducal carriages with their four well-harnessed steeds will take you wherever you desire. Here are the vineyards: walk in! Gather and taste as you list, for the bunches are large and luscious,—walls and hedges scarce. And when you are tired with concerts, grapes, and feasts, of bonfires and fire-works, just knock at the first house you come to and ask for a bed. Keep your money: give no name. Who here wants your purse or your passport? Every one has smiled and bowed to the traveller, and welcomed without knowing him: why should he insult them! O splendid remnants of ancient brotherhood! loving and holy confidence of man in his fellow! . . . Alas! thus was it," exclaims, with tearful eye, the patriot exile whose words are here cited, "at least before 1849, when Hungary still was free. But now, thanks to despotism, the Hungarian has lost his native confidence, his pristine benevolence and generosity. Open-handed as was once his nature, unstinted hospitality has succumbed to indispensable economy and thrift, for his burdens are augmented five-fold. He who formerly knew nothing about stamps or surcharges, monopoly or excise, has now to struggle against the griping hand of the tax-

gatherer. Yet a few years and you will be emptied, glorious family cellars! The old wine must needs be sold, for the royal imposts are heavy and exhaustive."

The wines from the BÀNAT are both white and red; the former being the more abundant, but generally speaking inferior, and the pale bright-red class, a good sound dry wine, the most esteemed. Besides these, two varieties of liqueur-wine are made; the one a proper *ausbrüch* and very luscious, derived from withered fruit, the other resulting from evaporation of the must, and checking fermentation with mustard and other stimulating ingredients. The wine districts are divided into three principal sections; viz., Vershetz, Weisskirchen, and Mehadia. The hilly slopes are for the most part very gentle, the prevailing aspect south and south-east. Vershetz itself is a very considerable town, and the first plantation in the district is attributed to a colony of Germans, chiefly from the wine regions of the Rhine and Moselle, who had formed part of the army of Prince Eugène. The present vineyards, however, are of later date, as they were almost entirely destroyed during the inroad made by the Turks in 1788, and subsequently replanted on a larger scale. The vintage takes place towards the end of September, but good cellarage is every where scarce, so that the wine, to its great detriment, has to be removed before it is fit. The climate around Weisskirchen is remarkably mild: spring frosts are extremely rare; hail-storms, generally so injurious to the vine, are infrequent; the summer heat is great, but not oppressive, owing to the prevailing breezes from the Balkan and Dinaric Alps, preserving freshness without imparting chilliness to the atmosphere. The vineyards of the BÀNAT are mostly regular, and the stocks

planted very close to one another. The soil of the elevated slopes consists mainly of a yellowish loam, mingled with slaty shingle and marl, and as the choicest liquors are derived from the growths of the upper level, the hill ground, though less productive, is most valued and generally preferred.

The district of Buda, situate on the west bank of the Danube, opposite the town of Pesth, yields a stout red wine which was once in great favour in this country. The peculiar growths of Palunia and Tropsfermuth pass under the general name of *Vermuth*. They are a preparation of grapes with wormwood, seeds, and spices of different kinds, over which they pour old wine and cork it up. Vermuth is an excellent stomachic, much drank at home, and as far back as the time of Queen Elizabeth was known and esteemed in this country for its refreshing and restorative properties. It is one of the few liqueurs that still maintain an ancient reputation, and although of late years its use here has fallen into abeyance, attention has been recently revived in its favour, and from its agreeable flavour and peculiar dietetic virtues, will probably again resume a place in general acceptance. This wine is not expensive, neither is it a factitious compound, or it would not have found mention here. In the interests of the nervous invalid, the dyspeptic, the languid sufferer from the influence of tropical climates, incipient phthisis, or want of stamina, it deserves especial mention, and to such it may prove a beverage beyond price.

AUSTRIAN wines, although for the most part large in quantity, and of very middling quality, contain a few that may challenge comparison with all but the best of Rhenish, French, or Spanish origin. Of these the pro-

duce of Transylvania stands first. The greatest future, however, is probably reserved to the Hungarian, Lower Austrian, and Dalmatian wines,—the latter, as well as the coast-land growths, being principally of a kind suitable for the dessert. In Venetian Dalmatia they make a wine at Sibenico called Maraschina, whence the name of the *liqueur* Maraschino di Zara, in the same territory. In Moldavia the vineyards near Cotnar produce a wine of a green colour, which deepens with age. It is nearly as spirituous as brandy, and by many is preferred to Tokay. In Moravia several generous wines are made; and in the Tyrol we meet with a few red varieties of a very useful quality, but not in excess of the requirements of its own population, by whom it is all consumed. In recent years the trade in Austrian wines has made considerable progress, and, with the growing means of improved transport, there is fair reason to anticipate a still greater extension. Efforts are being made to increase their export, especially to the East, to Russia, and to the north of Germany. It is an ascertained fact, that even the inferior sorts of the cool Austrian vintage are superior to the beverage commonly procurable in the East. They possess the great advantage of keeping well in hot climates, and may suitably meet the requirements and convenience of communities where the wine-consuming population greatly outnumber the Mahomedans.

It might have been reasonably expected that the cooler regions of the north of Europe would have checked the blighting march of the vine pestilence; but although its invasion was partial, and its general effect less destructive, the ravages it committed in Frioul, Dalmatia, and in the southern Tyrol were very severe,

The injury occasioned by the inroad of the malady in the provinces it infested gradually augmented until it affected a moiety of the vines, when it slowly abated, and finally disappeared altogether. During the prevalence of the disease in France, large consignments of the Hungarian wines were sold by French merchants as genuine Bordeaux,—no light circumstance, for although, perhaps, they cannot compete with the best produce of the Bordelais, they certainly rival successfully French wines of the second order.


The grape, of late years, has been cultivated in the southern provinces of RUSSIA with considerable success. Vines were first planted in the Crimea at the commencement of the present century on the suggestion of M. Pallas, an accomplished naturalist, cuttings for which were procured both from Asia and Europe, and French farmers and vine-dressers appointed to rear and manage them. Their labours have been so far successful, that Russia, it is said, could produce wines enough in the Crimean territory to meet the requirements of her own consumption. The beauty and fertility of the eastern valley of Soudak always awaken the admiration of travellers, where the number and luxuriance of the vineyards present one of the most charming scenes in Europe. At one time the Crimean cultivators prepared thick wines, or rather syrups, as well as confections, from the produce of their vines, and distilled brandy from the refuse of the grapes. But this has now ceased; they seek their advantage in the sale of wines, which are thought to be the best in the empire, and judging from the comments and opinions of tourists, and of many who drank them during the recent war, some of the vintages are of more than average merit. The fierce campaign

of 1855, however, and the prolonged siege and destruction of the formidable fortress of Sebastopol, occasioned sad havoc in the surrounding districts, and many a smiling and prolific vineyard was then devastated or totally uprooted. The plantations of Astracan are of much older formation, and the grapes, which were first introduced there from Persia by an ecclesiastic in the fourteenth century, have long been noted for their size and flavour. In the time of Peter the Great, Astracan grapes, then in high esteem, were conveyed to St. Petersburg for the royal table on account of their richness and beauty. They always bear a high price in that city from the cost and care necessary in the carriage. Both red and white wines are produced in Astracan, where twenty different sorts are said to be grown. The vines are protected from the extreme severity of the winter by a covering of earth or stubble. In the Caucasus it is sometimes customary to hang unripe poppy-heads in the cask during fermentation, by which means the intoxicating effect of the wine is much augmented. The wines grown in Russia, however, bear no comparison to the quantity of ardent spirit consumed by its rude, serf-like population. About thirty millions of gallons of coarse brandy are every year distilled in that country, besides a variety of other liquors; yet, notwithstanding such a large native production, no less than a million of roubles have been paid, for years together, on the import of wine into St. Petersburg alone.



SECTION XI.

The Wines of South Africa.

FRICA, once the scene of mighty conflicts and barbaric splendour, can no longer boast of its ancient Mareotic or its peerless Ethiopian ambrosial growths, and whatever adaptability for the grape the southern shores of the Mediterranean may have exhibited in the classic ages, the production of wine disappeared with the ascendance of the prophet of Islam : with few exceptions, the remotest point of Africa may be said to be the only spot on that vast continent that now sustains a vintage. The heat and aridity in some parts, and the excessive richness of the soil in others, are equally opposed to perfection in the grape ; the vines, once so famed, are now cultivated principally for their shade, and the fruit is neglected or dried for making raisins. Deserts of burning sand and a savage population occupy the middle portion of this quarter of the globe, and it is only at European settlements in the southern hemisphere that civilization has introduced one of its most abiding luxuries on any tolerable scale of extent or success. In portions of the Algerine territory, as well as on the northern coasts of Morocco, a little is made by members of the Hebrew race, and the produce of Tetuan approximates closely in quality to the Spanish wine of Xeres. But the destructive visitations of the locust, no less than the direct injunctions of the Koran, are serious obstacles in these localities to the tillage of

the vine, which must be left to the industry of people of an alien creed, though, in secret, numbers among the Faithful do not scruple to quaff the enticing draught with much gusto.

Until the subjection of the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch, no vine culture in southern Africa had been attempted. The climate is well known to be exceedingly favourable to vegetation. Fruits are ripened on the west coast of the colony in the greatest perfection; and no part of the world, perhaps, produces plants and flowers more distinguished for the elegance of their forms and colours than southern Africa. Resembling in temperature that of the south of Europe, it further affords every facility to the husbandman, and repays his care with early and abundant harvests. But for the successful melioration of the vine, excellence of climate is not the only requisite, and the nature of the soil has often a yet more immediate influence on the quality of the fruit. In this respect the Cape is somewhat deficient: few of the grounds first appropriated to vineyards contain the strata most suitable to the plant, and the produce, probably, thus contracted some of that flatness of taste common to wines grown in uncongenial ground. The predominant soils of the colony are a stiff clay, impenetrable to culture until thoroughly moistened with rain, and a light red sand, capable of extreme fertility wherever it is sufficiently irrigated. The country on every side is penetrated by ranges of naked mountains, and where these eminences form a channel for the floods of the monsoon, or natural springs arise, a singular luxuriance clothes the contiguous vales: the plain next the sea is covered with a deep and fertile mould, watered by numerous rivulets,

and beautifully diversified with countless trees, plants, and shrubs, but the largest portion of the wide-extended plains seems abandoned to hopeless sterility. The operations of nature, however, are here conducted in singular extremes. Where iron or its oxides are liberally mixed with the clay, and the fertilizing aid of the feeblest rill can be brought to bear upon the soil, astonishing fecundity usually ensues. Some of the best grapes in the colony are grown on these spots. In fruits, flowers, or graceful and enchanting shrubs, no country exceeds the Cape. The grapes, oranges, figs, peaches, apricots, plums, and other products of the temperate zone flourish in the greatest abundance and perfection, and strawberries are gathered ripe all the year round. No grapes on the continent of Europe are thought to be superior to those of this colony.

The principal vineyards at the Cape are situate in the vicinity of the capital, where the brightness of the atmosphere and equality of the temperature are highly favourable to the culture of the grape. But the proper choice of a site for a vinery was seldom or never considered by the Dutch, who first commenced planting under the governorship of Von Riebeeck in 1650. The fertility of some of the land near the early settlements was very great, yet not on that account alone more adapted for raising the vine: plantations were heedlessly formed on ineligible spots very soon after the settlers were located, and notwithstanding the existence of many self-imposed obstacles, they thrived well, and are still tended with unabated confidence and zeal. The vine-growers, or wine-boers as they are called at the Cape, are amongst the most opulent cultivators of the soil in the colony. The size of their farms is

usually about 120 acres, the land being for the most part freehold, and exempt almost from taxation of any description.

Stellenbosh, a considerable wine district north of False Bay, is so named from the then governor Stel and the bushes that covered it. He, with more than Dutch cupidity, seized upon large portions of territory for himself, and drew a great profit from the plantations and corn-fields in that part of the colony. To obviate the deficiency of moisture during the exhaustive dry season, he constructed a reservoir in the mountains to irrigate his farms and vines, conveying the water in a channel by his wine-stores to a mill where he ground his corn.

Drakenstein, another settlement north-east of Stellenbosh, was founded by a colony of French refugees on the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1685. Through the indolence or ignorance, however, which then prevailed, it would appear that land more applicable for the growth of corn was indiscriminately appropriated to the use of the grape; consequently in no country was there greater room for improvement, and none in which energy and science would earlier have exhibited their healing influence. But the avarice of the primitive Dutch farmers, like their inveterate adherence to established custom, was long un-eradicable; and notwithstanding they had before their eyes, in the fine plantations of Constantia, the beneficial results of appropriate soil and site, they declined to profit by the example, or take any pains to select the fittest locality for their vine-grounds, but persevered in establishing them as convenience prompted, or wherever they were likely to gather the heaviest crop. This improvident oversight was all the more reprehensible, as there

were many choice spots well adapted for the purpose ; but these were disregarded and passed over by inexperienced settlers for ground chosen from caprice, for facility of access, or the mistaken policy of the planters. Their descendants are still the cultivators, and although with them amendment can hardly be otherwise than slow, progress has been made, and the vintages are unquestionably better now than they were only a few years since. There is no reason why their labours should not ultimately be attended with ample success : except a volcanic soil, there are traces of every other kind of land congenial to the vine, and doubtless, with plantations now transferred to better sites, and due care in cultivating, harvesting, and discreet manipulation of the grape, a vast deal of wholesome and annually improving wine will be produced.

On the western side of the valley of Drakenstein stands the village of Paarl, surrounded by a fertile tract of land, and especially distinguished by a curious mass of granite, surmounted by a number of large pebbly stones like the pearls of a necklace, to which it owes its name. Here the vine is sedulously cultivated, and in this solitary glen some of the best table-wines of the colony are grown. Paarl is peculiarly situated and presents a somewhat singular aspect, being inaccessible on three sides, and rising about 400 feet from its base to the summit, where it measures a full mile in circumference. The slopes of the mountain side form a perfect garden of curious and beautiful plants, and a bright and cheerful feeling pervades the atmosphere around. In the autumn, the exquisite scenery of this lovely spot is further heightened by the presence of flocks of a beautiful bird called *the creeper*,

some of which unite the most enchanting powers of song with their own elegant and attractive plumage.

The wines of South Africa comprise both red and white varieties, the larger portion being dry. Besides the delicious Constantia, others excellent of their kind are obtained at Paarl, as well as from the vineyards of Drakenstein and Stellenbosh. The fruit is rich, full, and large, having none of the earthy taint once considered a characteristic of the wine. It is not improbable, therefore, that this peculiarity was derived from the stalks and stems, for all formerly went into the vat together, the whole management being chiefly confided to negroes. The culture, too, was exceedingly faulty, the process of fermentation unskilfully conducted; the preliminary operations were rude and slovenly performed, whilst, in order to raise the greatest possible quantity of grapes, the farmers, regardless alike of vinous flavour or quality, resorted to the reprehensible practice of manuring their vines with fresh litter; and wherever they had a good command of water, they further impaired the fruit by excess of irrigation. But obstacles such as these are not insurmountable, and much amelioration has already attended better methods of tillage, and the application of more care, skill, and discrimination in the ordinary course of manufacture.

Such having been the imperfect mode of conducting the vintage, it can hardly be matter of surprise that for a time so much of its produce proved inferior and unpalatable. The only exceptions deserving special notice are the growths of the Upper and Lower Constantia, so named after the wife of the Dutch governor, Vander Stel, their founder: the plantation forms two contiguous properties, situate at the eastern base of

Table Mountain, about eight miles from Cape Town, and midway between False and Table Bays. It lies directly under the mountain range, a circumstance to which the peculiar and productive powers of the ground are, no doubt, in great part to be attributed. The first vines, which were of the muscatel species, were brought from Shiraz. The soil is chiefly a sandy gravel and decomposed granite, lying upon a gentle slope well open to the influence of the sun: it is of very moderate dimensions, and divided into two parts, separated merely by a hedge,—the former producing the red sweet wine, the latter the white sort, and also a wine called Cape Hock. The vintage is conducted with much care, the grapes being freed from the stalks, and blemished fruit and other impurities removed before they are pressed. As the whole quantity of sweet wine annually made does not much exceed one hundred pipes, the price is high and well maintained. The produce of both grounds is similar in character and quality, yet connoisseurs profess to discern a considerable difference between the two. They always commanded a high reputation, and a century ago their rarity caused them to sell for between two and three shillings a-bottle on the spot. Although the vintages of Constantia leave no cloying or unpleasant taint on the palate, and are deservedly esteemed for their surpassing richness, yet, in point of flavour and aroma, they can scarcely compare with the muscadine wines of Languedoc and Roussillon, or the malmesies of Paxarete and Malaga.

Other African wines, as we have seen, on their first importation here were inferior to the produce of the older and better cultivated vineyards of Europe; but in character, body, and flavour they now exhibit a

marked improvement, and the awakened intelligence and sedulous attention bestowed by the colonists on this object, promise well for a reputation steadily advancing year by year. That the wines are innately pure, wholesome, and free from acidity, is fully established on high analytical authority; and as former objections to their truly vinous properties are clearly preventible, their progress towards a higher standard of perfection has been recognised by the British consumer, as evinced in their still extending use and popularity. This is amply corroborated by the evidence of official revenue returns. In the year 1853 the quantity of South African wine landed in this country was 102,816 gallons; by 1859 this had increased to 781,581, the annual imports of the intervening period being 560,040 imperial gallons, or more than double that of five preceding years ending 1850, the average of which did not exceed 265,000 gallons.

The older appellation of "Cape wine," which had become a by-word and reproach to earlier shipments, has given place to the more comprehensive term of "South African wine;" and there is fair reason for believing, that for vinous excellence and utility they equal many high-class continental growths, and are superior to most of the secondary kinds of either France or Spain. It will not be unreasonable, therefore, to expect, that the recent legislative reduction and equalisation of heavy fiscal imposts will be promotive of the comfort, the health, and general temperance of the community at large, and that the consumption of wine will be sufficiently expanded to stimulate the ambition and industry of the colonial proprietor to unremitting exertion, until his vines equal in quality and rival in

repute the more ancient plantations of European excellence and long-awarded celebrity.

In the Mozambique Channel, by which it is separated from the eastern coast of Africa, lies the island of Madagascar, one of the most remarkable in the world for extent and fertility. The vine in this distant clime is not altogether unknown, and although its cultivation there has been hitherto neglected, much might be expected from a spot where Nature has lavished with a prodigal hand her choicest productions. A ridge of mountains 10 or 12,000 feet high runs through the island from north to south, rich in valuable minerals and fossils, and giving rise to a vast number of flowing rivulets, which reach the sea, and abound with fish. Covered with a prodigious variety of beautiful trees and bright with tropical vegetation, its vast savannahs teeming with wild cattle, the umbrageous woods swarming with the honey bee, and possessing every variety of surface, the scenery of its mountain ranges is strikingly grand and picturesque; yet the central portions and secluded valleys have never been explored, and the secrets of its botanical treasures may lie concealed for generations to come before enterprise and cultivation shall open a path to knowledge. The climate is too deadly, the islanders too hostile, for the exercise of European skill and energy, and the indolent natives are easily satisfied with what is easily obtained. By these credulous and impulsive people, if we may accept the statement recorded by a distinguished foreign *savant*, M. Dellont (tom. i. ch. 9,) the grape was slandered and shunned as a poisonous fruit until the French undeceived and taught them its use and proper value,—a conservative notion inculcated, possibly, by their


Arab Mahomedan visitors, who may have considered, shrewdly enough, that prejudice was a better security than prohibition for the due observance of one of their cherished maxims, and so left the petty calumny to work out its own mendacious destiny.

The island is inhabited by several tribes or castes, whose physical and moral characteristics denote their descent from very different races. The people, variously estimated at from 2 to 4,000,000, although not savages, are rude and uninformed, and wage incessant war with one another. They are described as a peculiarly gay, thoughtless, and voluptuous race, equally void of care and forethought, yet always cheerful and goodhumoured. Among them the Hovas take the lead, as being the most intelligent, and by far the most enterprising class. Fetichism is the prevailing superstition. The island was known to the Arabs in the thirteenth century as *Zaledj*, and it was from Marco Polo that it first received the name of Madagascar. Although the natives have so long remained in the darkness of isolation and heathendom, events are occurring there of sufficient import to warrant the expectation that, at no distant period, they will be brought within the pale of Christian civilization.



SECTION XII.

The Wines of Madeira and the Canary Islands.

OST of the wine countries which now yield the choicest produce were originally indebted to Greece for their vines. Those of Crete were long sought for in preference to all others; and where the site proved genial, they seem to have experienced little degeneration in their adoptive soils. At a very early period they found their way into Spain and Portugal, and were thence propagated to the more northern regions of Europe. Much uncertainty prevails respecting the precise period when the grape was first planted in Madeira, though many suppose, with much probability, that it was supplied with stocks brought directly from Candia by direction of Prince Henry, who colonized it in 1421. The benignity of the climate and the volcanic soils that there abound were so favourable to their growth, that it was said in its earliest days to have produced more grapes than leaves, and clusters full a span in length,—a single bunch of one dessert grape often weighing twenty pounds. “The hills,” remarks an author of the close of the seventeenth century, “were then covered with vines, and the valleys with ripe grapes, which yielded a fragrant smell. They cultivated the black *pergola* grape, and made several kinds of wine. One, like Champagne, was not much valued; a second was stronger, and the colour of white

wine; a third, called Malmsey, and a fourth Tinto, inferior to Tent in taste, was never drank by itself, but mingled with other wines, to make them keep." The Jesuits at one time contrived to hold a monopoly of the Malmsey, of which there was but one good vineyard in the island. The Tinto resembles Burgundy when new, but is said to be softer. When old, it loses its colour and takes that of fine old Madeira, retaining its own scarcely longer than two years. It is very astringent, and thought to be an antidote in dysentery.

The island obtained its name from the first discoverers, who, finding it thickly studded with trees, called it Madeira, (*woody*). Set on fire by them on landing, a large portion of the forest was consumed by a conflagration that raged, it is said, for a long time, and thus the way was cleared for the reception of the vine. The sugar-cane, however, having found its way here from Sicily, Madeira was first distinguished for producing the best sugar known. For a long time this product was the principal commodity which it yielded to commerce; but after the rivalry of the West Indies rendered its culture no longer remunerative, the residents applied their undivided energies to the production of wine. It was not till a much later period that the merits of their vintages became generally known, and acquired that pre-eminence to which their innate excellence justly entitled them. Several varieties are raised, and both quality and flavour are influenced by the peculiarities of site and soil. The north boundary of the island, though sufficiently fertile, being exposed to cold winds and fogs from the sea, is less suitable to vine culture than the southern part, where all the choice plantations are accordingly located. Most of the red grapes are appropriated

to the manufacture of white wines ; but a portion of them are converted into *tinta*, or red wine, which, as long as it retains its colour, is sufficiently agreeable, though generally deficient in the high aroma for which the white sorts are distinguished.

The vines are planted in the grounds fronting the houses on lines of trellis-work seven feet high, with the branches conducted over the tops, so as to lie horizontal to the sun's rays. They thus afford a canopy for those who walk under them, yielding a delightful shade in that ardent climate. On the northern side they are mostly trained up chesnut trees, to screen them from the violence of the wind, but some of the plants are supported on frames not more than three feet high. Fruit ripens as high as 2700 feet of elevation, and wine is made at 2000. On certain rocky grounds, open to the full influence of the sun's action, the celebrated Malmsey is grown. As the grapes from which it is obtained require to be over-ripe, or partially shrivelled, they are allowed to hang for about a month later than those used in the manufacture of the dry class. Of this wine there are three sorts, the produce of three varieties of the plant : when of the best kind, it is most fragrant and delicious. One farm is appropriated for the exclusive supply of the royal family of Portugal. The very highest quality Malmsey is raised on the south side of the island from "an avalanche of tufa," lodged at the foot of a cliff almost inaccessible. Of this class very little reaches this country. Another much-esteemed sort is the Sercial, said to be the product of the Hock grape transplanted to the island, where it will thrive only on particular spots. When new it is very harsh and austere, and requires to be long kept before it is

thoroughly mellowed. It has a full body, a rich and peculiar aromatic flavour, and combines within itself all the requisites of a perfect wine. The quantity made, however, is very small.

Madeira wine must attain age on the island, if not sent to a warmer climate to promote its maturity. The demand for it in the British colonies, to which at one period it was alone exported, first led to a knowledge of the benefit to be derived from its removal to a tropical climate; and since it has come into more general use, it is prepared for particular markets by a voyage to the East or West Indies. Cargoes thus ripened sell for much higher prices than those imported directly from the island; but it does not necessarily follow that the consignments which have made the longest or hottest voyage turn out always the best. Much depends on the original quality of the wine, and on the quantity of spirit mixed with it; for although many choice samples are so obtained, yet no inconsiderable proportion lack their full flavour, and are rendered more liable to acidity. The change, however, which takes place in their character by this system is particularly striking. Perhaps no wines receive so much improvement by exposure to the influence of artificial heat as those in which a large amount of adventitious spirit is infused. When new, the wines of Madeira are characterized by a degree of roughness and fervour that renders them unfit for use, and the drier kinds have often a marked tartness, which would seem to predict a speedy decay; yet it usually happens that during a foreign voyage, or after being for some time subjected to a high temperature, this sharpness wholly disappears, or at least becomes greatly subdued.

The large additional expense attending this mode of improving Madeira wine has occasioned the adoption of various artificial methods to gain its full excellence, through a perfect decomposition of the saccharine and other active principles tending to fermentation: for this purpose both temperature and agitation are necessary. Some imagine the character of the wines to have deteriorated of late years; but the simple truth is, that Madeira, like all other wine countries, furnishes, along with a few superlative growths, a great many of indifferent quality. England formerly received only a small portion of its choicer produce; but an extensive and increasing demand subsequently led to large importations of secondary sorts, and these being sold much above their value, necessarily brought the whole into discredit. Although our American and West-India colonies were early and chiefly supplied from Madeira, yet its wines found little favour in this country before the middle of the last century. Spain and Portugal, and the Canaries, still furnished us with the stronger white kinds, and Rhenish came in place of the light vintages of France. Our officers, who had served in the West Indies, and became acquainted with the superior vinous properties of the wines of Madeira, are said, on their return, to have introduced that general preference for them which once so dominantly prevailed in English society.

Madeira is one of those hardy growths that bear age remarkably well, retaining its qualities unimpaired in both extremes of temperature, and constantly improving with the advance of time. Indeed, these wines can hardly be considered in condition before they have been eight or ten years in the wood, and afterwards allowed

to mellow twice that time in bottle. Their flavour and aroma perfect themselves by keeping, and the wine has never yet been drunk too old. When of prime quality and carefully preserved, it loses all its original harshness, and acquires that agreeable pungency, that bitter sweetness so highly prized in the choicest wines of antiquity,—uniting great strength and richness of flavour with an exceedingly fragrant and diffusible aroma. The soft nutty taste, too, which is often very marked, is inherent in this wine.

The insular state of Madeira, and its favourable geographical position, did not save it from the general devastation caused by the *oidium* blight, which made its appearance there a year earlier than on the Douro, and in a much more virulent form. The attack was not partial, as elsewhere, for in the second year of its sway (1852) it destroyed the entire crop of grapes, and fatally infected the plant itself. The yield had been decreasing, year after year, for a considerable period; but now the vines, with occasional exceptions, were everywhere uprooted, and the few that escaped have seldom produced healthy fruit since. For six years there was little or no vintage at all. The Portuguese government sent a commission for the purpose of investigating the causes of the calamity, but without any satisfactory result, either as to the real source of the disease or to its remedy, and suggesting no proper mode of treatment, or showing how its destructive course might be checked. The malady presented itself there in the same form as on the continent, and at the same season, which was soon after the disappearance of the blossom. The application of powdered sulphur, so efficacious elsewhere, was productive of little benefit,

and the only successful expedient used for arresting the progress of the blight in its earlier stages was a careful washing of the whole plant with a solution consisting of one part of glue to sixteen parts of water,—an operation which had been practised with good effect in the royal hot-houses of Sans-souci, in Prussia. The solution very soon dried, leaving on the grapes and leaves a glossy appearance. All so treated continued in a healthy condition, and even those affected by the fungus recovered beneath the crust. Keeping the grape close upon the ground, also, as a protection against the disease, is said to have been successfully pursued in the southern district.

The pecuniary loss sustained since the first appearance of the malady is stated, on the authority of Dr. Hermann Schacht, to have amounted in the autumn of 1852 to 1,137,990 Spanish piastres (190,000*l.*); and after waiting in vain through a period of five years for a better state of things, the impoverished proprietors abandoned as hopeless the future cultivation of the vine. A traveller who might chance now to visit Madeira would scarcely believe that but a few years since the greater portion of the island was richly studded with the genial and ever-welcome plant. The cause of its disappearance, however, must not be attributed entirely to the destructive ravages of the blight, but partly, also, to a growing indifference to its culture in favour of that of other products; so much so, that of late it was somewhat difficult to procure a sufficient quantity of grapes for invalids when medically prescribed for their ailments. The vineyard has been in a great measure replaced by sugar plantations, which annually increasing in extent, contribute, in their turn, not a

little to the decay of the vines, as the former require frequent irrigation, and this excess of moisture causes the latter to rot in the humid ground. Notwithstanding these discouraging circumstances, laudable attempts to renovate the failing grape by the introduction of fresh varieties are being made by some of the wealthier growers, who are grafting upon the old stocks the Catawba and Isabella species (both of which are indigenous to the United States), and a successful issue to this experiment may yet avert the early extinction that seems to threaten the island wine-trade: from the nature of the soil and climate, however, none but old vines will produce first-class wines.

The CANARIES, a group of islands seated on the west coast of Africa, have for ages been famed for a rich and fragrant wine of more than usual excellence, which is produced in considerable abundance, the exports amounting to 25,000 pipes annually. The scenery of all these islands is elevated and full of mountains, the slopes of which display a profusion of vegetation. Their volcanic origin admirably adapts them to the cultivation of the vine, which is said to have been first planted there in the reign of Charles V. with roots brought from the banks of the Rhine, the change in the character of the produce being due to the influence of soil and climate. The grape, however, that gives the Malmsey, or Malvasia, was derived from the isle of Candia. The most remarkable, as well as one of the largest of the group, is the isle of Teneriffe. As a natural object it is chiefly notable for its lofty peak, of the sloping sides of which the island actually consists. By the rapidity of its rise it presents, within a very short space, every variation of temperature, from the

colder climates of the north to those of the tropical circle. Laguna, its capital, is 2000 feet above the sea, and is cool and agreeable, whilst the port of Santa Cruz below it is intensely hot. The declivities and rising hills are covered with vines, and cultivated like a garden. The summit of the peak is the seat of an extinguished volcano, having remained tranquil during many ages, and presenting little or no symptom of renewed eruption. Some heat is still perceptible in a few crevices, which emit aqueous vapours, with a peculiar buzzing noise. In former days arbitrary variation and corruption of terms confused the nomenclature of its vinous produce. As Canary wine it was once much drunk in England, where it was known only by that name. The flavour is good, and it possesses ample body, ranking, without apparent cause, second only to Madeira,—possibly from careless or unskilful management of the vintage. At Grand Canary both Malmsey and Vidonia are grown; the latter is a dry wine, and derives its name from the *vidogna* grape, or is a corruption of Verdone, a strong wine of a green tinge, but harsher than Teneriffe. It was prepared formerly chiefly for the West-Indian market, where the fervent climate materially aided in mellowing and rapidly developing its better qualities. The Malmsey is very rich and perfect of its kind, and was once much in request. The AZORES, a smaller island-cluster in the same region, produce about five thousand pipes of wine. Nearly the whole of these are grown on the isle of Pico, but their quality never stood very high.

Of the Canary varieties several approach the finer sorts of Madeira in quality, and the produce of Teneriffe often passes under that name. It is derived from the same


species of grape and a similar soil; but although the temperature is higher and more steady, the Teneriffe wine never reaches the full body and rich flavour of the prime growths of Madeira. Formerly a large quantity of sweet wines used to be manufactured here, but more recently the rising preference for the dry kinds has induced the growers to limit their attention almost solely to that class. The Malvasia is not so sweet or strong as Teneriffe, but when about three years old it has the flavour of a rich and ripe pine-apple. It is a wine very difficult of preservation when exported, especially to cold climates, where it often turns sour.

For many years a manifest preference existed for Canary wine, which, writes the royal historiographer Howell, "is accounted the richest, most firm, the best bodied, and lastingest wine, and the most defecated from all earthy grossness of any other whatever. French wines," he continues, "may be said to pickle meat in the stomach; but this is the wine that digests, and doth not only breed good blood, but it nutritieth also, being a glutinous substantial liquor. Of this wine, if of any other, may be verified that merry induction,—that good wine maketh good blood, good blood causeth good humours, good humours cause good thoughts, good thoughts bring forth good works, good works carry a man to heaven: *ergo*, good wine carrieth a man to heaven."



SECTION XIII.

*The Wines of Greece and the Western
Archipelago.*

ONTINENTAL Greece stands in a volcanic zone, which extends from the Caspian Sea to the Azores. Although no traces of fiery eruptions are now discernible in this region, history is full of the effects produced there in early ages. The aspect of the country is generally mountainous, the climate propitious. Its serene and cloudless sky formed an untiring theme for classic praise, and the transparent buoyancy of the atmosphere helps to develop and display its various natural products in their highest beauty and perfection. The soil, throughout the greater portion of the whole surface, is highly favourable to the vine, and serves to extensively diversify the character and quality of its botanical wealth, which imparts additional force to the charm and splendour of an idyllic scenery. Hills of calcareous earth, with slopes of happy exposure, and volcanic or gravelly strata, offer situations of rare occurrence for vineyards, and nothing is wanting to secure the purest and most delicious produce but a more consistent and skilful treatment of the vintage, and the abandonment of the deleterious mixtures which long-cherished prejudices have inveterately established. In olden times very empirical notions prevailed respecting the proper management and treatment of wine. The grapes were often gathered indiscriminately, and

the fermentation as carelessly conducted; salt, baked gypsum, and lime were used to subdue the sweetness of the liquor, and a portion of resin was constantly introduced to imitate the piquant briskness of old wine; but as the true principles and laws of fermentation are now generally recognised, the improvement discernible in its more recent vintages tends to a growing conviction that Greece, for pure and wholesome wines, is destined to form a source of considerable future supply.

Of the precise nature and taste incidental to the wines of ancient Greece the moderns are but imperfectly informed, and much in relation to their identity, their quality and flavour, must be left to inference and conjecture. That this refined and enlightened community preferred old wines to new, that they sometimes used them perfumed, that they mixed water with their wines, and that habitual drunkenness was considered infamous, we learn from the gifted authors whose works have been preserved to us through the darkness of ages; but the practical information conveyed by these writings carry us very little farther. Possibly the manufacture of the vinous juice as conducted in Cyprus at the present time resembles most nearly the general practice pursued by the ancients, for the general character of dry or luscious wines, depending mainly on the soil or time of vintage, must have been similar in their day as now.

The vine is variously cultivated in different parts of Greece. On the continent the plantations were formerly numerous, and the produce considerable. In some places the high method of training over trellises prevails; in others the plant is not permitted to rise but a little more than a foot from the ground, and is kept closely pruned, a trench or basin being excavated round the principal

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stem to secure moisture at one season, and at another to save the grapes from contact with the soil while the sun's heat is concentrated within it. At Corinth, where the vine flourishes remarkably well, it is not trained trellis-wise, but the plants are shaped like currant-bushes, and the rich clusters of small pearly grapes hang pendant around them. "The people of Nauplia," Dr. Clarke tells us, "were early renowned for the culture of the vine; they observed that those trees on which asses browsed were more abundant in their produce. This suggested the art of pruning, and, in consequence of their success, they formerly worshipped an ass's head as an idol." Thessaly is thought to possess the finest climate in Greece, and its various fruits are matured in great beauty and perfection. The vines here are mostly dwarfed. The bunches of fruit are fine and abundant, the berries being unusually large, and of a rich and luscious flavour. The beverage they yield is sweet, and would be good, were it not too often tainted with the nauseous taste of pine resin, infused with the notion of ripening and preserving it, in blind conformity with ancient practice. Resident Turks, though they will not openly venture to touch wine itself, will partake freely of the must, thinking by this supple evasion to escape an open breach of their Prophet's covenant, as it certainly serves to stifle inconvenient scruples of conscience. The plains around Mount Hymettus, near Athens, ever famed for its bees and superlative honey, where the busy-winged insects in countless numbers still suck the fragrant thyme that clothes the Attic hills during the spring, yield a few red and white wines of a very agreeable character: equally light, dry, and refreshing, they are thought to closely resemble Burgundy and Chablis in

delicacy and flavour.* An excellent full-bodied red sort, named Como, is grown near Syra, which bears a close affinity, in taste as well as in general character, to a stout and generous Port; and very good ordinary wines of both colours are found in Albania and Romania, as well as in Macedonia, where, for the most part, the climate is cooler than elsewhere southward of the Alps.

Napoli di Malvasia, in the Morea, is the original seat of the renowned Malmsey, which has since been imitated in nearly every other wine country in the world. But under the paralysing apathy of Turkish sway, Grecian enterprise and population have gradually dwindled, and during the fanatic war of emancipation the neglected plantations were trampled down, burned, or heedlessly uprooted; the most wanton devastation was everywhere committed by the Ottoman soldiery, who in their accustomed manner ruined and desolated every village they could subdue, and for years afterwards the Morea afforded only wine of very indifferent quality. It might, however, again become excellent, and prove a source of future wealth to the country, if the people better understood how to adapt it to the taste of foreigners.

The numerous isles that besprinkle the Ægean sea owe their origin to the action of volcanic forces in the primeval ages of time, and possess considerable historical interest as the scene of many remarkable incidents recorded in classic lore. Ever famed for beauty of climate and exuberant fertility, we may trace their invariable commendation through the earliest annals. Dr. Oliver Dapper, a diligent Flemish historian, in his

* At the International Exhibition of 1862 this wine was awarded a Prize medal on its merits. From purely accidental circumstances, very few Greek vintages were represented on that occasion.

Description Exacte des Îles de l'Archipel, cites the writings of Herodotus, Diodorus, Pausanias, Thucydides, Strabo, Tacitus, Pliny, Solinus, and other ancient geographers in testimony of the early pre-eminence of the Grecian Archipelago,* and the abundance and excellence of its wines,—a reputation, doubtless, well founded, since the same natural advantages and their beneficial appropriation continue down to the present day. The air of all these isles he describes as pure and salubrious, and the vegetation as rich in flavour and fragrance, and very bountiful. Coins and medals peculiar to each community, and of various denominations, were current in considerable numbers, some of which bore on one side a cluster of grapes in token of their fecundity in the gifts of nature, and there is not a single habitable isle among them without something uncommon or remarkable appertaining to it of one kind or another.

Of all the wine-producing sections of the Archipelago mentioned in the annals of past history, Cyprus was ever designated as the most distinguished as well as the largest of the numerous isles in those waters. It was consecrated by the ancient Greeks to their goddess Venus on account of its great fertility and the vast natural riches it contained, for it was customary with them to dedicate to that divinity every thing which possessed the power of multiplying abundantly.

The grapes of Cyprus, for size and luscious sweetness, are said to be unequalled by the produce of any other country; whilst the amplitude of the clusters can be compared only with those brought by the spies from the land of Canaan. Some notion may be formed of its

* Archipelago is a corruption of *Ægeo-pelago*, the modern Greek pronunciation of *Αἰγαῖον Πέλαγος*, the *Ægean sea*.

profuse powers of vegetation from a fact registered by the vigilant pen of Pliny, that the staircase of the celebrated temple of Diana of Ephesus was formed from a single vine-stem of Cyprus, which reached from the base to its full summit. The wine obtained from the fruit is bland, odorous, and delicious to the taste, and is also esteemed as being particularly efficacious in strengthening a debilitated stomach, and aiding the functions of an impaired digestion. It keeps well, and maintains its quality for nearly a century. In colour it is naturally of a dull red, but it soon contracts a yellowish grey tinge, and as it increases in age acquires a balsamic property, salutary for valetudinarians when taken in moderation. The hills which bear the vine are covered with flinty stones and a blackish earth, interspersed with ochrous veins. The Commandery of the Templars and the knights of Malta once possessed many hamlets and vineyards near Paphos, and the produce is still called the wine of the Commandery. It is obtained from a berry of a red colour, and resembles in hue the Italian wine of Chianti. As soon as it is made, it is put into large cone-shaped vessels of baked clay, which are half buried in the ground, their bases ending acutely, like amphoræ. A rich muscadine is also made in Cyprus: the sweetness of this wine is excessive; at first it is white, but acquires a red colour and increase of body from age. A kind of wine *liqueur* is exported from Cyprus, but little if any comes to the West.

The island of Candia, formerly called Crete, acquired early renown for the quantity and excellence of the wines grown there. The Pythian oracle of Delphic Apollo, it is written, first taught the natives its use, and the method of preparing it. Martial, and other classic

writers, make mention of a luscious wine of this isle known as *Passum*, obtained from dried grapes, and to this day its best and most valued product is the delicious Malvasia, which, Diodorus informs us, was called Pramnian wine. The same term is used by Homer, (*οἶνος Πράμνειας*, *Il.* λ. 638,) and should be understood as referring to the same vintage. This "Malvasia wine," notes Fredrika Bremer in her charming narrative of a recent Eastern tour, "is an earthly nectar." When subject to Venetian rule, Candia and Cyprus supplied the whole of Europe with their finest dessert wines; and so abundant was the vintage, that the former island alone is said to have exported no less than 200,000 casks of Malmsey annually. Candia still produces wines, both red and white, of superior character and quality, as well as two or three very good muscats; but as the latter do not bear sea-carriage well, they are little known beyond the mouth of its own narrow strait. The principal wine-makers at the dawn of civilization were the monks. At the monastery of Arcadi fine and noble cellars are shown, where the produce of the vintage was formerly stored. The wine of that locality is a rich Malmsey. The wine-bibbers of Candia were once so notorious, that a party of them would gather round a good-sized cask, and not rise from their potations until it was emptied.

Chios, now called Scio, is also justly regarded as one of the finest and most agreeable islands of the western group. It is situate in the Icarian sea, and its vinous products, the red as well as the white, were highly prized by the Latins and Greeks, more especially the growths around the hilly circuit of Ariusium. Pliny praises emphatically the luscious Chian wine, and Strabo pronounced it the best in all Greece. Homer, on

account of its fecundity in all sorts of fruit and grain, gave this isle the surname of *Fertile* preferably over all others. The inhabitants claim for it the honour of giving birth to that great man, and believe that the excellent wines gathered there once belonged to him. They further maintain, that in the latter part of his life the immortal bard established a school at Chios, where medals were struck in his honour, and festivals celebrated every fifth year.

Chios enjoys a further renown from the circumstance of its being the native seat of the Mastica plant, which yields the valuable gum of that name, and where it continues to flourish in all its pristine vigour. It is not a little singular, however, that although its culture is conducted with ease and facility, it will grow only in one favoured portion of the isle; the roots will choose their own soil, and no art or labour can succeed in extending the limits of reproduction beyond the barrier apparently circumscribed by nature itself. During the months of May and June narrow incisions are made in the bark, from which a translucent white gum, odorous and friable, is slowly exuded. This product is held in high estimation by the Turks, and the Sultan was wont to send annually a number of his own gardeners to superintend the careful collection of the crop, and to prevent under severe penalties, even to the forfeiture of life, any pillage or appropriation by the native Greeks. Fifty cases were usually set apart for the exclusive use of the seraglio, where portions were kneaded with the bread, as corrective and wholesome for the stomach. The ladies of the harem chewed it incessantly to remove impurities from the mouth and gums, as well as to preserve the teeth clean and pearly white.

A more dignified position, however, was in reserve for the medicinal properties of the mastica gum, for it now takes rank as the chief ingredient of a cordial tonic in high repute throughout the East, and known by the name of *Chio Mastica Raki*. By a peculiar process in the distillation of a native spirit called *raki*, the more essential particles of the gum are volatilized and thoroughly incorporated with the nascent spirit, and hence the name. This liqueur is said to be wondrously invigorating and appetizing, and further imbued with other intrinsic sanitary virtues; and this may well be, seeing that the healing qualities of the plant have been acknowledged from the earliest times. The learned Theophrastus, a pupil both of Plato and Aristotle, and Dioscorides, physician to Antony and Cleopatra, concur in naming it as deservedly famous in their day; and being accounted a specific for many ailments, and especially those of the chest, there can be little doubt that this resinous concretion was extensively employed in the early practice of physic. To restore the appetite, to aid a weak digestion, to sweeten the breath; to allay an obstinate cough, and check the spitting of blood; as a cure for eruptions and diseases of the skin, for soreness of the tongue and gums, and as an external remedy for acute tooth-ach, are among its reputed merits. An astringent juice, drawn from the root, bark, and leaves, was also successfully employed in dysentery, for abscess or internal hemorrhage, and as an emollient for fractured limbs. In its application to the arts, the value and utility of gum mastic are well known.

Samos, also a large and fertile island, situate in the sea of Ionia, is divided only by a narrow strait from the mainland of Asia Minor. It is famous as being the

birth-place of Pythagoras, and still more so as the seat of the renowned Samian pottery. It contains a double range of lofty mountains, some of which are covered with umbrageous woods, and present the most beautiful scenery. Although it ranked high in classic times for the abundance and rare excellence of its fruits, the wine was considered by the antients to be inferior to several others. This island is still remarkable for its great fecundity: the exports of grapes, raisins, and wine are very considerable, and it is reckoned the richest island in the Levant. It is noted in the present day for excellent muscat: large quantities, both red and white, are raised, and Samian wine is still held in much esteem.

Most of the minor islands furnish some variety of wine more or less in repute. Ancient Cos, now called Zea, is very productive, and in primitive times supplied the same good quality it yields at present. From this early character for excellence some imagine it to have derived its name, since the three letters of the word Cos are held to signify three principal requisites; viz. colour, odour, and savour, properties which, according to the sage dictum of the school of Salerno, mark the character of all good wine: "*Vina probantur odore, sapore, colore,*" &c. It was in quiet retirement here that St. John wrote his inspired book of the Revelation.

The isle of Rhodes, high in chivalric fame, obtained honourable mention in very early times for the goodness of its vinous products. They are nearly all of the sweet and luscious class. Both Galen and Pliny speak of them approvingly, as being equally excellent with the wines of Cos, and highly prized for their bland and dulcet fragrance. Nor is the praise of Virgil wanting to the juice of the Rhodian grape, since at the banquets

of the gods he assigns it a distinguished place at the dessert, or second course of the celestial feast :—

“ The Rhodian, sacred to the solemn day,
In second services is pour'd to Jove,
And best accepted by the gods above.”—*Georgics*, b. ii.

One species of grape grown on the island is as large as a damascene plum, and very similar in colour. The sun there is sufficiently powerful to maintain the vines in bearing every month in the year, and if watered judiciously, both ripe and incipient fruit appear on the same plant at the same time. Tenedos is situated at a short distance from the Dardanelles, and although its appearance is diminutive, rocky, and barren, it has the reputation of producing red wines of a very superior character. Both dry and sweet varieties are grown there: its rich muscadine is much in request, and is exported largely.

The vinous treasures of the memorable isle of Naxos, or Naxia, are often mentioned with eulogy by the early bards and other writers, who likened them to nectar, and every thing they considered most delicious. According to Diodorus, it was the gift of fertility to the isle in wines of so much excellence that manifested the love and affection borne towards its inhabitants by the divine Bacchus, and caused it to be especially consecrated to his honour. It is now chiefly remarkable for its temple to this the supreme deity of the pagan natives, who were notorious for their gross and habitual intemperance. The only memory of Ariadne to be found in the island is a marble fountain, erected in the town of Naxia, and called after her name. The scenery of this lovely spot, however, with its balmy air and cloudless sky, equally charming and luxuriant, is thus described by a recent intelligent tourist. “ The valley of Melanés

is an earthly paradise. Vines clamber up into the lofty olive trees, and fall down again in light-green festoons heavy with grapes, which wave in the wind. Slender cypresses rise up from amidst brightly verdant groves of orange, fig, pomegranate, plum, and peach trees. Tall mulberry trees, umbrageous plants, and ash trees glance down upon thickets and hedges of blossoming myrtles, oleanders, and the agnus cactus." Nor, in the view of the same author, is the valley of Potamia less deserving of admiration. "You cross a stony mountain-ridge, then descend a ravine by different steps cut in the marble rock. This flight of steps inclines to the right between the rocks, and here we are all at once arrested, astonished, struck, — nay, enchanted; for the scene, which on the turn of the path suddenly reveals itself to our glance, is as magnificent as it is peacefully beautiful. A vast circuit of swelling, billowy foliage lies like an immense lake within an enclosure of mountains, with sunlit slopes and hills scattered with white villas, villages, and Venetian towers." Lemnos, Tenos, Thasos, Lampsacus, and Lesbos (now Mitylene,) also yielded wines of much repute in very early times, and all their coins and medallic emblems display heads of Bacchus and Silenus, or else ivy-leaves, amphoræ, grapes, or panthers, allusive of their genial and fruitful clime.

Conspicuous, however, among the Cycladean group must ever stand the isle of Santorin, and whether regarded for its vine-loving soil, or for the fearful convulsions to which in past times it has been exposed, it calls for something more than a mere passing notice. Hitherto but little known and less cared for by European geographers, it has yet played no inconsiderable part in the developement of the occult and sublime

operations of nature, respecting which a few particulars can hardly fail to awaken interest in every reflective mind, for the island is rich in the history of its catastrophes. At different periods no less than six or seven principal cities have been engulfed or laid in ruins, in whole or in part. The first on record was that of Eleusis, swallowed up in the waves at the south end of the isle; the second and third, both erected at different periods on the same site, were levelled on the plain of Perissa; the fourth, Thera, was destroyed by an earthquake on mount St. Etienne; the fifth, probably Œa, was half submerged, half overturned at Kamari; a new convulsion subverted the sixth town at Cape Kouloumbo; and at the extreme northern point of Therasia a seventh was razed, and partly buried in the neighbouring sands,—to say nothing of others that may have disappeared without leaving behind a single trace of their previous existence; for who shall set bounds to the insatiable gluttony of a volcano portentous as that at Santorin!

Considered only in relation to its actual dimensions, it would scarcely be deemed worthy of special mention; but, apart from other weighty reasons, the island, although but small, for its fertility of soil and valued products, for an active and successful culture of the vine, for its industry and nascent commerce, merits to be regarded as one of the most estimable and attractive in the whole Archipelago; whilst the beauty of its appearance, the mildness and salubrity of the climate, and the amenity of the inhabitants combine to render it one of the most agreeable residences in the Mediterranean. Herodotus, the most ancient of the profane historians still extant, records the period and mode in which it was

first colonized: he tells us that the island was divided into seven cantons, yet omits all mention of the occupants, their numbers, or their chief towns, of which the names of three only have reliably come down to us; viz., Thera, Eleusis, and Cea. To subsequent writers, and to its own ancient monuments and richly sculptured remains, we are chiefly indebted for what else we know concerning its early history. Before the island was first tenanted, it had been the object of repeated volcanic action, owing its origin to a sudden eruption, that cast it up from the innermost depths of the sea. The position and aspect of the stratification, the quality and colour of the materials of which the island is composed in nearly all its breadth and depth, internally as well as externally, from its hidden base in the ocean to the summit of its loftiest mountains,—all testify clearly that it drew its existence from the exercise of giant subterranean forces, which the positive traces of potency and havoc on every part place beyond the possibility of doubt. Assuming the form of a lofty hill, it endured for ages in fertile beauty. Then came a day when suddenly the hill-top sank in amid smoke and flames, and the centre of the island subsiding, it was transformed into a huge basin, with steep and frowning walls on every side.

On approaching its shores from the sea, Santorin presents an extremely singular appearance. Its immense crater, opening like a lofty, broken stone-ring, discloses a perpendicular, semi-circular, graduated wall, with its many-striped strata or layers of earth,—yellow, red, white, grey, violet, and some other colours. From its outside edge it slopes in easy and beautifully verdant lines towards the sea. Imagine, if you can, a huge

crater, larger than any you might have hitherto fancied possible, bounded by perpendicular sides nine hundred feet high, and resting on the verge of a basin of the sea, which pours in through two openings in its walls,—one on the north, and the other westward; imagine to yourself, peering out from the edge of this giant-caldron many miles in circumference, four or five white towns and villages, the clustering houses of which look huddled on each other as if afraid of losing their balance, and tumbling all together into the sea; imagine that you can discern within the circle a mass of black lava rock, a little isle in the centre of the island, with phantom-like ships anchored close to the beetling cliffs, and you may then conceive how strange and dismal it must seem as you sail into its repulsive boundary, feeling yourself as puny and helpless as a fly in the jaws of a slumbering beast of prey;—how uncomfortable to be moored fast to its threatening walls, and how dangerous to clamber along the rocky steep, where a number of huge boulders, detached from the overhanging rock, give you friendly warning of the fate which has befallen many a previous wanderer, and which at any moment may be your own! But the painful task once accomplished, the sudden relief from flurry and nervous excitement, the fresh air, the golden sunshine, the glorious opening prospect, the verdant fields and vineyards rich with clustering fruit,—all this is not easy to describe, but could it be pictured in the mind, some idea of Santorin would be realized.

In the time of the Greeks and Romans the island bore the name of Thera, and the circumstances that place its volcano prominent amid the most powerful and remarkable known, are not only that by its nature and position it unites all the attributes incidental to every

other, but as possessing some properties peculiar to itself which merit the consideration of inquiring and philosophic minds. Indeed, its repeated disintegrations, the history of the Titanic upheavings it has survived, the singularity of the sporadic isles from time to time cast up around it, the nature, the form, and the quality of the territory, the dark and frowning cliffs, the ruin or disappearance of its more ancient towns, the mineral exhalations that continually ascend from the surrounding waters, its numerous antiquarian fragments,—all are objects marvellous in themselves, well calculated to arrest attention, and to awaken the slumbering indifference of minds even the most estranged from scientific studies or pursuits. It will be matter of little surprise, therefore, to hear that the curious and learned from all countries are its occasional visitors, who come to view, to investigate, and to satisfy the spirit of inquiry. M. le Père Autry, an enlightened missionary priest and experienced traveller, has placed on record the impression made on his mind by the aspect of Santorin in these emphatic terms: “This island contains many things so astonishing, and rarities so surprising, that after having journeyed through all France, Italy, and Greece, a part of Anatolia and Syria; after having seen the finest isles of the Levant, Cyprus, Rhodes, Malta, Chios, Mitylene, Naxos, Paros, Milo, &c., I view with astonishment and admiration the frowning grandeur of its rocks, its dry and serene atmosphere, the deep and cavernous mountains, the vines thriving in a parched soil, the fields fertile without manure, and deriving neither moisture from the clouds of heaven, nor irrigation from the hand of man. Surprised at what is here to be seen, the island deserves to be visited, for in

all my lengthened travels I have never encountered any thing to equal it."

But the authority that most commends itself to our respect and credence centres in the testimony of the Abbé Pègues, who resided at Santorin for more than twenty years, and to whose deep research and intelligent labours* we are indebted for many interesting revelations respecting an island which, in the opinion of that author, is destined—perhaps at no distant period—to be the scene of similar fortuitous devolutions. His account of these preternatural occurrences and their momentous results is graphic and forcible, and the following animated passage will be perused with interest:—"Of all the volcanoes that exist on the face of the globe, none perhaps have been productive of phenomena so extraordinary, so appalling, or so varied as those of which the little isle of Santorin has been the frequent scene. Upheaved in one mass by volcanic force from ocean's unknown depths, again and again augmented by successive eruptions the most formidable the mind can conceive, and constantly contending for the mastery with submarine fires, which explode afresh after intervals of a thousand years, this isle has been transformed in every sense, and many times changed in appearance and grandeur. On the recurrence of these stupendous movements new islands sprang up, some shortly to disappear, others still retaining the indelible marks—even the heat one had almost said—of their terrible origin. Ever tremulous, and seemingly poised by Almighty power on an unstable base, it appeared at times

* *Histoire et Phénomènes du Volcan et des Îles Volcaniques de Santorin*; par M. l'Abbé Pègues, ancien Missionnaire Apostolique dans le Levant, et Supérieur de la Mission de Santorin.

ready to sink below a precarious foundation, or to cast itself headlong beneath a yawning abyss. The scorizæ and dross then emitted by the burning volcano, the earthquakes it occasioned, the islets it submerged, struck awe and desolation to the hearts of the inhabitants, bewildered with fright and alarm for their safety. Such is this extraordinary island : it is indeed, so to say, the classical land of volcanoes, where the sublime of admiration is linked with the sublime of terror ; where the most astonishing phenomena of our planet are manifest under every repulsive form ; where the intense action of subterranean fires has exercised all its mighty powers ; and it is hard to believe that nature has any where ever displayed itself in more prodigious efforts, or with results more majestic or astounding.

“ The irregular cliffs that border the gulf on all sides, the forbidding aspect of the amorphous rocks, lofty, disordered, and riven in sharp, abrupt peaks, present a scene so sad, wild, and fearful as to disconcert the eye of the spectator when looked upon for the first time. Contemplated altogether, and in their full outline, they resemble a vast amphitheatre, lined with grassy banks and knolls, as if expressly formed to assist at these tragic representations. Flanked at certain points by mountains black and flame-scorched, they seem from on high thus to admonish the inquisitive mind that scans them : ‘ Here have happened mighty things ; here was the theatre of catastrophes, profound in their incidents : see, admire, and tremble ! ’ Such is the grave impression they make, the awe they inspire. It is the very climax of ruin and desolation.”

The eruption that first disclosed the seat of a powerful volcano worked a sterling benefit as well as a surpassing

wonder, since it was productive of an island impressive and charming enough to deserve the appellation of Calliste, (*the beautiful*). But unstable at its base, in the maturity of time it was on the verge of a fresh disruption, as momentous as any recorded in history; for again the elements of violence and subversion are seething in its entrails, destined soon to engulf in the watery waste the larger portion of the now lovely isle. Silent after the first outburst for a long series of years, the volcano had lost its terrors; its very existence was no longer a source of alarm, and much less possible was any supposition of the malevolent forces elaborating anew in its bosom. At an hour so still and serene that all nature seemed slumbering in security and repose, the sudden submergence in the surrounding deep of a moiety of their little world was the first intimation to the scared residents of a fresh and destructive calamity. The actual portentous manifestations that preceded or accompanied this disastrous convulsion can never be precisely known; but the immediate result was the dismemberment of the primitive island into three distinct parts, and the formation of a vast and fathomless gulf in its place. The dissevered portions were then called—1. Thera, which, as by far the largest, inherited the previous name; 2. Therasia, as diminutive in size; 3. Aspronisi, which is little more than a rocky shoal. It was soon after discovered that the vegetable mould, impregnated with the dust of subterranean fires, produced richer vintages and choicer wines than it had ever done before. Assuming on the gulf side the form of a crescent, the largest of the three now constitutes the modern Santorin, one of the wealthiest and most populous islands of the Lesser Cyclades. This every way re-

markable event occurred about 250 years ago, when more than 750 persons perished miserably; whilst the fumes of the fire and sulphur affected so powerfully those who happily escaped, that they turned as black as coal. The vapour and smoke raised from the bottom of the abyss were diffused so forcibly on every side, that their effects were felt in distant Constantinople, where every article of silver became suddenly tarnished. The noise and the crash were heard as far as Smyrna, and the sea all the way to Alexandria was covered with cinders and dust that floated on its surface. These were the scorïæ and pumice stones which, thrown to a great height, were scattered in their descent in every direction.

Thera, originally named Calliste on account of its singular beauty, was peopled by two different nations at distant intervals, both dating back to the highest antiquity, and to those mythical ages where we find the truth of history so involved and obscured by delusive fables of pagan origin. The premier colony, according to Herodotus, came from Phœnicia under the lead of Cadmus, son of king Agenor, about the year 2600, and concurrent with the period when the children of Israel quitted the desert to enter the promised land of Canaan. This prince, on crossing the seas in search of his sister Europa, after her abduction by Jupiter, arrived at the isle, and charmed with the beauty of the spot, or urged possibly by the spirit of ambition which the occasion may have prompted, he at once resolved to occupy it, and establish there a sovereign dominion. With this view he landed a few of his followers, and appointing his relative Membliares for their governor, pursued his voyage and bootless errand. The little community,

however, that he left behind gradually multiplied and prospered, and the descendants of Membliares, who ruled through eight generations, and their successors maintained the dominion for a space of 363 years, *i. e.* from 2600 to the year 2963, when the sovereignty passed to fresh masters by the arrival of another enterprising body of settlers. This is all that history teaches us of the first occupation of Calliste, and although we cannot be fully certain that the island was already inhabited when the Phœnicians arrived there and took possession, the colony could boast the fact that it had for its founder one of the most celebrated men in the annals of ancient Greece, for this was no other than the royal Cadmus, who successfully laboured to civilize his people, who taught them the art of writing, and who ingeniously added sixteen letters to their alphabet, which from his name were called *Cadmeans*.

The second colony was established under the guidance of Theras, the son of Austesion, a Theban noble of royal descent, who landed there with a body of emigrants he brought from Lacedemonia 1150 years before the Christian era, avowing his purpose to be, not to overthrow or expel the resident community, or to subject them to his dominion, but to live peaceably and amicably among them. By this politic conduct, whatever might have been his secret intentions, he conciliated the natives, prevented their taking umbrage or alarm, and allowed time for the final success of the schemes he meditated. Many favourable circumstances concurred to further his views, and to facilitate his progress to supremacy. He was of the race of Cadmus, whose name was still cherished and revered by the islanders, whilst the high rank he held in his native Sparta obtained for

him the good-will of the inhabitants, and aided in paving the way to the power he coveted. Of the sequel, we read in Pausanias that he governed the people so well, and rendered himself so beloved for the mildness of his sway, that in grateful recognition of his merits they spontaneously called, first the city he had built, and afterwards the island itself after his name, and instituted an annual fête in his honour, offering the customary sacrifices to him as their founder.

Thera, although produced by violent volcanic eruptions, never possessed the stern appearance that might fairly be supposed, and such as is ordinarily observable in places of similar origin. The name of Calliste in other days sufficiently attests its primitive beauty, which seems to have formed the chief attraction in the settlement of the two first colonies. It is not possible to determine precisely the several changes in its nomenclature. In the course of centuries various appellations have been bestowed on it by ancient geographers or other writers, who often confound one place with another in their narratives. For the adoption of the name of Santorin, the only one known in modern history, no positive evidence is on record. According to some the island was called *Sainte-Irène*, and afterwards Santorini, because of the martyrdom there of that saint, and for which the island was placed under her protection both by the Greek and Latin churches, who annually celebrate the fête-day with great solemnity on the fifth of May. The inhabitants, however, following tradition, say that the name was derived from a little church dedicated to the same saint situate on the adjacent islet of Therasia. Yet, if we should regard as true the interpretation placed on it by Dante, there is

authority for tracing it to another source; for, in his view, the name of the island should be Santalène, composed of the Italian *santa*, and of the Greek *heleni*, whence, by a slight transition, we have Santorini. Be this as it may, the conformation of the modern Santorin will reflect no discredit on the ancient Calliste, for besides other and more substantial advantages, its unique scenery, and the picturesque features that greet the eye at every turn, present a source of perpetual admiration. The sweetness of the prospect is further augmented by the majesty of the surrounding heights, and from the summit of Mount Elias on the west, rising in solitary grandeur to an altitude of two thousand feet, is visible one of the finest landscapes conceivable. Cultivated nearly over its entire surface, the shaded walks, ornate with fruit and foliage, contrast magnificently with its external sterile acclivities, half tilled and half bare, its broad mountain elevations scorched by fire, half sublime and half terrible, that embrace the isle on every side; whilst its proximity to the ocean, whose waters perpetually lave the sandy shore, realizes for the inhabitants an agreeable promenade both for health and recreation.

“Viewed indeed from the centre of the gulf,” writes the venerable Abbé, deeply moved by the grandeur of his theme, “the island assumes a repulsive aspect, which depresses the spirits, terrifies the imagination, and fills the soul with pensive melancholy. The shattered cliffs, crumbling around in shapeless ruin; the everlasting rocks, that rise in majestic grandeur above the clouds; the vast amphitheatre of stupendous devolutions, on which the morning beams fall cheerless; the pallor shed by the evening sun on the darkening sea-swept

slopes, whose motley points seem to grin hideously in mimic laughter; the deep and fearful precipices, from whose base the strained eyeballs labour to pierce the upper ranges of basalt that crown the ridge; the ravages of the volcano, where still are visible traces of the fiery element that worked results so grand,—all press so forcibly on sight and mind, that one might almost fancy being present at this grand display of the marvellous. We seem again to see the dazzling flames gushing in torrents from the nethermost deep; they traverse the crevices and hollow caves, envelope the mountains in mephitic vapours, which obscure the lurid sky, and cover the earth with fear-inspiring darkness. You seem almost to hear the fierce and deafening roarings of the burning pit; the prolonged roll and subterranean noises that intermittingly growl in its hollow depths; the startling detonations that resound in echoes on every side. The claps of thunder, so to say, burst again in imagination, and you shudder at the thought; you believe almost that you gaze on the molten lava and glowing rocks, now ejected swiftly into space like huge rockets, through clouds of ashes and burning minerals. Amid such exciting scenes of terror and desolation your baffled sight perceives all this vast theatre of confusion and amazement vanish in a moment, swallowed up in the encircling waves with the rapidity of thought, and giving place to the blank stillness of immobile nihilism. The world presents no spectacle, either real or imaginary, more imposing, more tragic, or more astounding. With one foot planted on the hanging rock that overlooks these depths, I cast my eye over the vast circumference, meditating on the magical power and effects of volcanic force; I feel

myself entranced as it were by the dissolving scene; my spirit, faint and dizzy from vertigo, is unequal to the burthen, and I sink under the overpowering impression! Such were the solemn words of supernatural accent once mysteriously muttered on the western shores of Santorin.

“Again, let us look on the tortuous path which leads by a thousand zig-zags from the beach to the summit of the plateau: in crossing these scarped and trackless rocks, the boldest quake with dread of being dashed to pieces. Here is no stay for mortal footstep; we crawl up, we toil, we puff, we lose breath, and drop exhausted before we reach the top: each step demands a pause, and after slipping backwards twenty times on the crumbling gravel and loose flints, we gain the summit with lacerated knees and choked with thirst and dust, denouncing Santorin a thousand times, and the folly that brought us there.* However, these passing terrors bring their own compensation, for after all they present so startling in themselves,—after all that has been described, both hideous and dangerous,—after all that we suffered in scrambling to the summit, the scene that bursts suddenly forth on reaching the plateau forms so remarkable and refreshing a contrast, that the eye is instantly relieved, and greets the view in grateful surprise. The first step you take on the heights that overlook the town and the gulf below reveals a prospect delightful and luxuriant. Extensive vine-grounds, stretching out before you on every side, rest on a gentle declivity for three or four miles from the edge of the

* It should be mentioned that a pathway has more recently been formed for the assistance of future wayfarers, which now renders the access less difficult, less toilsome, and less hazardous.

craggy cliffs to the sea-shore, over which the eye hovers without let or hindrance,—and seeing, feels joyful.”

Of all the fertile neighbouring isles Santorin appears to be one where the land, and the vine in particular, is best cultivated, and where the occupants merit praise as well for their activity, as for the care and intelligence they associate with it. Hardly a corner is left untilld; and although its clearance and manipulation involve much labour and expenditure, they cultivate it up to the margin of the rocks. Few countries are seen where they plant the vines so far apart from each other,—often eight feet or even more, the distance being governed by the quality, the strength, or the aridity of the ground, in order that each stock may be sufficiently nourished, and its roots freely developed. The stems, consequently, are strong, stout, and vigorous; instead of rearing one branch, or a slender and delicate shoot, they train four, five, six, which spread out in the form of a chandelier, crowned with an abundant foliage. In due time these become loaded with giant grapes that rejoice the vintager, and amply recompense him for his labour, for his care, and for the space which he devoted to the advantage of the root itself. As the mode of training the vine at Santorin differs considerably from the practice usual in other countries, and is certainly somewhat singular, the peculiar system there adopted may be deserving of mention. After closely pruning the young plant for the first three or four seasons, and when it has formed a few branches of sufficient strength, the shoots are cut down to two or three feet in length, twined all together in a roll, and then laid horizontally in a circle on props to support them in the shape of a kind of crown, and in such a manner, that the first

shoot will interlace with the second, and that with the third, and so on of the others. Each succeeding year, after dressing the tendrils which the crown has put forth, and pruning such as are too weak, they entwine and rest them on the circle formed the preceding season, widening successively every new layer, and continuing the operation for a period of fifteen or twenty years; so that a sort of funnel or inverted cone is gradually produced by a succession of these crowns uniformly superposed. The plants so fashioned, when in full verdure, resemble a circular bushy shrub, become well laden with fruit, and produce a much larger quantity than older vines; but the wine derived from the grapes is considered inferior in point of quality.

The vinous products of the island, which comprise both red and white, are large in quantity and fine in quality, clean, pure, and wholesome. The chief wines of commerce derive their names from local affinities. The best red growth is called Santorin, and being dry, spirituous, and agreeable to the palate, a rich Claret in character with a genuine Port-wine flavour, well sustains the high reputation it has acquired. Thera, again, is a generous white variety, mellow, pleasant, and full-bodied, and, as a useful wine of much intrinsic worth, is regarded with more than ordinary favour. Another excellent white description, called in the island the "wine of Night," is supplied of two qualities, under the distinctive names of Calliste and St. Elie, the former being the stouter and richer of the two: alike endowed with many preferential qualities, brisk, limpid, and of good flavour, they approach the more delicate French vintages in tone and character, and form admirable supplements to the dinner-table. Besides these, there is a

delicious muscadine of wide celebrity, named Vin Santo, made of two colours, the one a deep purple, and the other a golden amber ; both are surpassing rich, abound in alcohol, and diffuse a fragrant aroma that is very enticing,—properties which secure for it a marked preference in the chief cities of southern Europe.

The vintage of Vin Santo, perhaps the most known and best appreciated out of the island, is said to excel the finest products of Naxos, Paros, Tenedos, Scopelos, Chios, and all the malmseys of the Archipelago or the muscat of Samos. Its inherent properties are so generous, that with more suitable management and care than is ordinarily given to it, the choicer samples would excel even the renowned *vin de Chypre*, and without undergoing so many manipulations to improve and ripen it. When well made it exhibits a silky softness, a honied fulness of flavour that hangs tenaciously on the palate without betraying its innate strength, which is scarcely felt at the moment. Confined to the dessert, it is ordinarily served in small glasses even at Santorin, and it is peculiarly suited to the taste of ladies, who in their choice of wines mostly prefer those which are sweet. It is best when it has acquired considerable age, and is perfectly bright ; it is then rich in aroma and perfume, with a balmy smoothness grateful alike to the taste and the stomach,—a wine, indeed, that, “without fear of rejection, might appear with honour at the table of kings, and figure with distinction at their banquets. Its golden colour, however, and its alluring flavour, which invite us to drink, often prove a treacherous snare ; for as its potency is not quickly perceived, numbers have been made to repent making too free with its seductive qualities, and trusting too far the honey-lipped hypo-

crite." In the manufacture of Vin Santo the mode pursued is very simple; it consists in merely exposing the grapes after being clipped from the vine to the influence of the sun for eight or ten days, till they are sufficiently candied for yielding a wine more or less generous, more or less luscious, as may be required. By this means all the aqueous portion of the fruit is absorbed, and if in this state the syrupy extract could be made to flow, wine might be produced of the consistence as well as the sweetness of honey.

The choicer brands of the white table wines, carefully bottled and kept some time, much resemble Madeira in character. When very old, of first quality and securely sealed, they are often preferred for dessert by those whose palate cannot relish the rich sugary sweetness of the Vin Santo. "The wines of Santorin," observes Fredrika Bremer, in her recent book on *Greece and the Greeks*, "will keep good year after year. I have visited a great wine-cellar excavated within the mountain, and have there tasted sixteen or eighteen different sorts of wine, all prepared from the grapes of Santorin. I was most pleased with the 'wine of Bacchus,' with the taste of nectar and colour of liquid gold; so also the 'wine of Night,' which is colourless, and has obtained that name from the fact of the vintage taking place during the night, and from the grapes being hidden under the leaves of the vine, and not exposed to the influence of the sun, by which means the wine is not coloured by it. It has an agreeable acid flavour, like Rhine wine, only milder. The entire island is a vineyard, and the productiveness of its volcanic soil for wine has attracted thither a population which is now too large for the resources of the island."—vol. ii. p. 1. "There we found

sent down for us a superabundance of good things,—grapes, apricots, figs, and large bottles of Callista wine, sweet, red, and thick, almost like a *liqueur*, and which is especially refreshing when mixed with water.”—p. 11. “We ate a cheerful dinner at the ‘Dimarch’s, with compliments and toasts, which were drunk in nine different kinds of wine,—Bacchus-wine, Santo-wine, Night-wine, Callista-wine, and other kinds,—all good; but the wine of Bacchus, nevertheless, the best.”—p. 10.

More than sixty species of grape are naturalized at Santorin, but in the manufacture of wine, both red and white, one sort, the *assyrticon*, is almost exclusively employed. Fruit for the table is raised in great profusion, and some of the vines yield enormous grapes, the bunches weighing sometimes as much as ten or twelve pounds. “I have seen,” says a credible witness, “a pannier of 48 lbs. filled by a single stem, although this is of rare occurrence.” The fruit in general is much more juicy than in France, and when ripe does not set the teeth on edge, as in some countries. In former times, the chief products of the island were barley and cotton, and more anciently still the olive also, but the culture of the vine has nearly superseded that of every other. In ordinary seasons the growths yield about 9000 pipes of wine, but in years of abundance 11,000 pipes are obtained, and sometimes more. The exports being thus reduced to the single article of wine, the commercial relations of Santorin have hitherto been confined, for the most part, to the limits of the Black Sea. The principal consignments go to Taganrok at the mouth of the Don, to Odessa, and to Tanais in the sea of Azoph. At Taganrok the wine is bought by the Cossacks, who convey it at great cost to the interior

provinces of Russia, where it undergoes various manipulations, and is too often sadly disparaged by mixture with wines of inferior quality. For this compound its reputation serves as a passport, the genuine being reserved to the use of families of opulence and rank. In still earlier times, when the vineyards were as yet but inconsiderable, the shipments were mostly restricted to the neighbouring islands. By degrees, however, the field of enterprise was extended; the shores of the Euxine were visited, and the wines at the present day are received with the same unqualified approval in the New World as in many of the principal cities of Europe. "In fine," remarks our intelligent informant, M. l'Abbé, "I would here repeat, that the Santoriniotes well understand how to fabricate their wine, and permit no sophistication whatever; they neglect no care to preserve it in its natural state, or to guard it from deterioration either in colour, flavour, or purity, so as to ensure for the consumer all the reputation it deserves."

In the present, as in former ages, the best Greek wines are of the luscious sweet class. Those made in Cyprus and Samos, the red muscadine of Tenedos, and the white of Smyrna, vie with the rich Hungarian vintages, and have probably undergone little or no change since the days of Strabo and Pliny, who reckon them among the most estimable in the world. Scio still produces a wine called Homer's nectar, as it did 2000 years ago: the white and black grapes are mingled to make this wine, which is in high esteem in the East.

Selim II. conquered the island of Cyprus that he might be the master of its vinous treasures. At that time wines of eight years old were found that burned like oil. After sixty or seventy years, some of this

wine becomes as thick as honey. Several of the islands, however, as Ithaca, Cephalonia, Candia, and Cyprus, yield abundance of dry red wines, which, with a little more care in the manufacture, might be rendered fit for general exportation. In some places the product is collected in skins smeared with tar, which impart a disagreeable taste, and unsuit it for use until subdued by long keeping; but the poverty of the farmers will seldom allow them to adopt proper means for preserving their produce. Some of the Cyprus wine is so tainted with the flavour of the pelt, that it cannot be drunk without the addition of water, except at the risk of a severe headach; and one growth of Chios was said to be so potent, as to overcome almost instantly the stranger who might unwittingly quaff the enticing draught.

The IONIAN ISLANDS yield good and serviceable wines, whenever care is exerted in the management of the vintage. The red wine of Corfu is distinguished by its lightness and delicacy: it also produces, from dried raisins, a cordial liqueur called Rosolio. Cephalonia, besides the red kinds common to the other islands, has a white muscadine peculiar to its own shores; and the Zante wines, both dry and sweet, are in much esteem. Of the latter, one is a *vin de liqueur*, made from the Corinth grape. They have also a rich muscadine wine, which is without a rival in the Levant, and is thought to resemble in character the imperial Tokay. All the varieties grown on the island are strong, and they make one kind which is taken as a cordial, notwithstanding water is added to the grapes after they are crushed.

But the isles of the Ionian sea, once known as the *Republic of the Seven Islands*, and the neighbouring coasts, are renowned more for their bountiful supplies

of the useful dried currant than for rich or mellow wine. This article of domestic import, the staple of modern Greek commerce, is the fruit of a species of vine bearing so close an affinity and resemblance to the ordinary grape plant, as to deserve a passing notice. In form, leaf, size, and mode of growth, to the eye of the casual observer it presents little or no apparent difference, its berries growing in similar bunches, which look exactly like miniature black grapes. The word *currant* is a corruption of Corinth, from which once-celebrated Grecian city they were first imported, and it has similarly impressed its name for the fruit on most European languages. A stout, full-bodied white wine, called Corinth, of considerable merit and agreeable flavour, is obtained from its fruit, which also yields a sparkling variety of good quality, with much of the character and briskness of Champagne. Corinth is delightfully situate in the centre of the Morean isthmus. From the neighbouring heights of Helicon and Parnassus the view is incomparable. Three years ago an earthquake of two minutes' duration overwhelmed the city, and it is now little else than a mass of rubbish and loose stones. The inhabitants have ceased to build on the same site, as the recurrence of decennial catastrophes seems to prove that a volcanic axle of earthquakes passes under the ancient city, and Patras now takes the lead in foreign commerce.

The currant vine is an exceedingly tender plant, requiring the greatest care in its cultivation; yet in the end it well repays the cost and patience bestowed upon it. It is extremely fastidious in its selection of the soil and temperature suited to its growth, and its after developement is so slow, that for six years it bears

no fruit at all, and does not yield a full crop before the fifteenth season. It thrives best on the southern shores of the gulfs of Corinth and Lepanto, and on the ancient Peloponnesus. The only other places where currants will grow are three of the more fertile of the Ionian isles, for they resist every attempt at transplantation in other countries of similar temperature or latitude. In Sicily and Malta the cuttings passed into the ordinary grape, and in Spain they would not take root at all; even at so short a distance as Athens recent similar and persevering attempts signally failed, yet the fertile and lovely island of Zante is nearly buried in the profusion of its innumerable plantations. During the long and desolating war of Greek independence the cultivation was neglected, and the vines were mostly burned and destroyed; but in more peaceful times industry resumed its quiet sway; the currant trade is again in the ascendant; it has already assumed gigantic proportions, and mainly contributes to the wealth and employment of the population. The annual aggregate exportation of currants from the Morea alone now amounts to 70,000,000 lbs., the greater part of which is shipped to Great Britain.



SECTION XIV.

The Wines of Persia, Arabia, and the Holy Land.

FOR the benignant and luxuriant clime of Persia the proud distinction is claimed of being the native seat of the vine, and this opinion derives some plausibility from the extraordinary perfection which its fruit attains in that country. The grapes in the immediate vicinity of Ispahan abound in much profusion, and their quality is superlative. None procurable at Constantinople, in Crete or Cyprus, in Syria, in Provence, or in Italy, will bear comparison, it is said, with the *kismish* grape, of which the berry is white, of an oval shape and middling size, having a very delicate skin, an agreeable acidulous taste, and no seed. It is in great request, both for the table and the vat, and when dried forms an excellent substitute for currants. At Shiraz this fruit is described by Sir R. Kerr Porter as growing to a size and fulness hardly to be matched in other climates. Yet, according to the statement of another accomplished traveller, Mr. Morier, even the grapes of Shiraz, in their turn, are surpassed in quality by those of Casvin. The Persians have a tradition that wine was discovered through an accidental circumstance by their king Jemsheed. This monarch, having a passionate fondness for grapes, directed a large quantity to be placed in a vessel of considerable size, which he stored in a cellar for future

use. Some time afterwards it was found that the fruit had fermented; and this natural process being little expected, and less understood, it was condemned a dangerous and poisonous; so the king ordered it to be closed up, and marked accordingly. It so happened that a lady of the harem, tired of life from *ennui* and the sufferings she endured from a chronic neuralgic affection, contrived to get secret access to the store, and resolutely drank of the ambiguous fluid: pleased unexpectedly with its soothing influence, she indulged freely and, in plain truth, got drunk. She slept, awoke in health, and afterwards luxuriated in so many deep potations, that she finished it to the last drop. The king, discovering what had been done, took the hint for his own behoof, and hence the origin of the veritable juice of the grape. Whether this story is founded on fact or is purely fabulous, the general assent of universal tradition ascribes the first source of the vine to Persia. The fruit in that country, certainly, attains a remarkable size, some of the berries forming a fair mouthful and the provinces bordering on the southern end of the Caspian Sea have been always in repute for excellent wine. The Armenians are said to claim precedence because Noah planted his vineyard near Erivan, upon the very spot where he and his family resided before the Deluge; but the probability or otherwise of this archaic pretension must be left for learned theologians and curious casuists to divine.

A vast proportion of the Persian empire would disappoint the traveller who has heard of the supreme beauty of the country, and the luxuries which are there said to abound. The fertile spots, indeed, are equal to every thing narrated of them, but in proportion to its

extent of surface they are not very numerous. It is chiefly along the line of mountains that stretch from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea that the best wine-districts are situated. The whole country round Shiraz is covered with the vine, and it is in Ferdistan, upon the lowest slope of the mountains near that town, that the largest grapes in Persia are grown: but the imperial grape of Tauris is most extolled for eating and the table, being thought more delicately luscious.

The principal vineyards in the environs of Shiraz are situate at the foot of the mountains to the north-west of the town, where the soil is rocky, and the exposure extremely favourable. The vines are all kept low, and are occasionally supported by stakes. The finest red wine is made from a grape named *damas*: it is said to possess much strength and richness, and to keep well for fourscore years, retaining all its virtues in the highest perfection. Twelve varieties of grape are grown near Shiraz, including a violet, a red, a brown, and even a black species,—as the *samarcand* grape. A single bunch of some kinds will weigh as much as a dozen pounds. The wine of Shiraz is sold by weight, and is kept either in flasks or well-glazed earthen jars. It is described by Chardin as of excellent quality, and though inferior in delicacy to the vintages of his own country, and at first somewhat rough to the taste, yet, after drinking it for a few days, he relished it so much as to give it the preference over all other wines. Kæmpfer extols it more highly, placing it, in point of flavour and aroma, on a level with the best growths of Champagne and Burgundy. The declining demand, however, and the legal obstacles opposed to the manufacture, have probably tended to impair the quality:

the culture of the vine at the present day is comparatively neglected, and only small quantities of the highest standard are now procurable. Mr. Morier mentions a singular custom among the vine-dressers of Persia, who sometimes train up their plants on the face of a wall, and then make them hang down on the opposite side by affixing weights to the tendrils and branches. One of the wines of Shiraz is a *liqueur*, made remarkably sweet and rich, and full of strength and perfume. The red sort sent to Europe is like Bordeaux in appearance, and of a taste not always agreeable to strangers. Teheran, Yezd, Shamaki, Gilan, Casvin, Tabriz, and Ispahan constitute the principal vine-districts. Few Persian wines, however, are much known out of their several localities; most of them are indifferent, and even the wine of Shiraz no longer maintains the peerless celebrity which it enjoyed of old.

Notwithstanding the denunciation of the Koran against the use of wine, a great deal is secretly consumed by lax professors of that creed. But the Persians, who are of the sect of Sonnites, or followers of Ali, have always been less scrupulous observers of this precept than the more rigid disciples of Omar; they frequently indulge in wine, and generally to intemperance, as they can imagine no pleasure in its use, unless it produce the full delirium of intoxication. The Turks, when they imbibe the forbidden draught, laugh at Christians for mingling water with it; and yet if they spill but a single drop upon any part of their apparel, however costly it may be, they immediately cast it from them as polluted. Of late years the manufacture of wine in Persia has become greatly reduced, and there is too much reason to surmise that the produce of the still

has usurped its place with the Mussulmans in their covert and zealous oblations to Bacchus. The Armenians at Chiulful were formerly great drunkards, though not profane or quarrelsome in their cups; on the contrary, they were doubly devout, and when very much intoxicated, poured forth incessant prayers to the Virgin and her Son. The Turkish population is eminently prone to intemperance; hence the Jews and Armenians prepare wine expressly for the use of Mahomedans, by adding lime, hemp, and other ingredients to increase its pungency and strength; for that which soonest intoxicates is by them accounted the best, and the lighter and more delicate kinds are little esteemed. Indeed the gravity, calm and unbending, that once distinguished the denizen of the East has long been on the wane, and a growing toleration and the practice of social intercourse and refinement, as well as mere jovial amenities, are said to mark the bearing of the wealthier members of the community. In corroboration of this alleged relaxation of their proverbial stolidity, the shade of the illustrious Byron is evoked in saying that "Suleyman Aga, late governor of Athens, and now of Thebes, was a *bon vivant*, and as social a being as ever sat cross-legged at a tray or a table. During the carnival, when our English party were masquerading, both himself and his successor were more happy to 'receive masks' than any dowager in Grosvenor Square. On one occasion of his supping at my apartment in the Franciscan convent, his friend and visitor, the Cadi of Thebes, was carried from table perfectly qualified for any club in Christendom, while the worthy Waiwōde himself triumphed in his fall."

Shah Abbas II., historians inform us, was much ad-

dicted to wine, and made his courtiers share in his revels, yet he did not on that account neglect state affairs. His cellars were abundantly stocked with the choicest vintages of Georgia, Karamania, and Shiraz, preserved with great nicety in bottles of Venice crystal; and every six weeks he received from the first of these countries a supply of twenty chests, each of them containing ten bottles, and each bottle about three quarts. He had also, at different times, wines sent him from Spain, Germany, and France; but he drank chiefly those of Persia, deeming them preferable to all others. Solymán, his successor, indulged in wine to great excess, and being seldom quite sober, was exceedingly cruel in consequence. His son, Hussein Abbas, was so struck with the baneful effects of intemperance, probably from his father's evil example, that he prohibited the use of it throughout his dominions; but this decree, admitting of no exceptions, so interfered with his mother's comfort and ordinary habits, that to obviate the privation she feigned serious indisposition, and her complaisant physicians at once declared that nothing but wine would save her life. Hussein, from motives of filial piety, immediately rescinded the distasteful interdict, and even obliged his wily parent so far as to partake of it himself. Under the spell of its influence he rashly abjured his former prudent notions, and soon became, like his two royal predecessors, and with still more disastrous results, a confirmed slave to an inordinate love for the seductive charms of vinous inspiration. The red wine of Shiraz has been lauded in exaggerated strains by the verses of Hafiz; but it is not improbable that, like the Falernian of Horace, its praises were as much due to poetic fancy as to supreme excellence.

IN ARABIA the vine is cultivated by Jews and Christians, and there too the forbidden draught is quaffed with great relish by merry and unstable Mahomedans whenever they can get it unobserved. It is much to be feared that this tying down poor human nature with unnecessary or arbitrary restraints everywhere makes sad hypocrites of mankind, who finding it not always easy to keep even the great laws, are ever inventing some excuse to slip off preternatural handcuffs; and so with the eastern reveller, the cup that inebriates seems all the more ardently coveted from being sternly prohibited by the mandates of an intolerant creed. Although the use of wine was interdicted by Mahomet as one test of faith in his disciples, it is manifest that for any such restriction he derived no sanction from the precepts or example of the patriarchs of old, for our most ancient and sacred records frequently recognise the beneficent properties of the vine, and the great utility of its produce to man, as well as its constant presence at the tables of the great. Thus we find it narrated of Joseph, that when interpreting the dream of the king's butler he said, "God bestowed the fruit of the vine upon man for good; which wine is poured out to him, and is the pledge of fidelity and mutual confidence among men; and puts an end to their quarrels; takes away passion and grief out of the minds of them that use it, and makes them cheerful."*

In the writings of the Jewish historians we also read how constant and vigilant were the rulers of that chosen people in providing and protecting vine-grounds for the several tribes; and as a supposition is sometimes hazarded that their produce in patriarchal times was a

* Josephus on the *Antiquities of the Jews*.

mild and simple beverage, unlike the stronger wines of modern growth, the following curious narrative respecting certain problems propounded by the Persian king Darius and their solution by attendant soothsayers, testifies convincingly both as to the familiar use and the potency of wine in those early ages. "Now in the first year of king Darius he feasted those that were about him, and those born in his house, with the rulers of the Medes and princes of the Persians, and the toparchs of India and Ethiopia, and the generals of his one hundred and twenty-seven provinces. But when they had eaten and drunk to satiety and abundantly, they every one departed to go to bed at their own houses. And Darius the king went to bed, but after he had rested a little part of the night, he awoke; and not being able to sleep any more, he fell into conversation with the three guards of his body, and promised that to him who should make an oration about points that he should inquire of, such as should be most agreeable to truth and to the dictates of wisdom, he would grant it as a reward of his victory to put him on a purple garment, and to drink in cups of gold, and to sleep upon gold, and to have a chariot with bridles of gold, and a head-tire of fine linen, and a chain of gold about his neck, and sit next to himself on account of his wisdom: and, says he, he shall be called my cousin. Now when he had promised to give them these gifts, he asked the first of them, Whether wine was not the strongest? The second, Whether kings were not such? And the third, Whether women were not such? or whether Truth was not the strongest of them all? When he had proposed that they should make their inquiries about these problems, he went to rest; but in

the morning he sent for his great men, his princes and toparchs of Persia and Media, and set himself down in the place where he used to give audience, and bade each of the guards of his body to declare what they thought proper concerning the proposed questions in the hearing of them all.

“Accordingly, the first of them began to speak of the strength of wine, and demonstrated it thus: ‘When,’ said he, ‘I am to give my opinion of wine, O ye men! I find that it exceeds every thing by the following indications: it deceives the mind of those that drink it, and reduces that of the king to the same state with that of the orphan and he who stands in need of a tutor, and erects that of the slave to the boldness of him that is free; and that of the needy becomes like that of the rich man, for it changes and renews the souls of men when it gets into them; and it quenches the sorrow of those that are under calamities, and makes men forget the debts they owe to others, and makes them think themselves to be of all men the richest; it makes them talk of no small things, but of talents [of gold and silver], and such other things as become wealthy men only. Nay, more; it makes them insensible of their commanders and of their kings, and takes away the remembrance of their friends and companions, for it arms men even against those that are dearest to them, and makes them appear the greatest strangers to them; and when they are become sober, and they have slept out their wine in the night, they arise without knowing any thing they have done in their cups. I take these for signs of power, and by them discover that wine is the strongest and most insuperable of all things.’

“As soon as the first had given the forementioned

demonstrations of the strength of wine, he left off; and the next to him began to speak about the strength of a king, and demonstrated that it was the strongest of all, and more powerful than any thing else that appears to have any force or wisdom. He began his demonstration after the following manner, and said, 'They are men who govern all things; they force the earth and the sea to become profitable to them in what they desire, and over these men do kings rule, and over them they have authority. Now those who rule over that animal which is of all the strongest and most powerful, must needs deserve to be esteemed insuperable in power and force; for example, when these kings command their subjects to make wars and undergo dangers, they are hearkened to, and when they send them against their enemies, their power is so great that they are obeyed. They command men to level mountains, and to pull down walls and towers; nay, when they are commanded to be killed, and to kill, they submit to it, that they may not appear to transgress the king's commands; and when they have conquered, they bring what they have gained in the war to the king. Those, also, who are not soldiers, but cultivate the ground, and plough it, and when, after they have endured the labour and all the inconveniences of such works of husbandry, they have reaped and gathered in their fruits, they bring tributes to the king. And whatsoever it is which the king says or commands, it is done of necessity, and that without any delay, while he in the mean time is satiated with all sorts of food and pleasures, and sleeps in quiet. He is guarded by such as watch, and such as are, as it were, fixed down to the place through fear; for no one dares leave him even when he is asleep, nor does any one go

away and take care of his own affairs, but he esteems this one thing the only work of necessity, to guard the king; and, accordingly, to this he wholly addicts himself. How, then, can it be otherwise, but that it must appear that the king exceeds all in strength while so great a multitude obey his injunctions?"

"Now when this man had held his peace, the third of them, who was Zorobabel, governor of the Jews who had been freed from captivity, began to instruct them about women and about truth, who said thus: 'Wine is strong, as is the king also, whom all men obey; but women are superior to them in power, for it was a woman that brought the king into the world; and for those who plant the vines and make the wine, they are women who bear them, and bring them up; nor, indeed, is there any thing which we do not receive from them, for these women weave garments for us, and our household affairs are by their means taken care of and preserved in safety; nor can we live separate from women. And when we have gotten a great deal of gold and silver, and any other thing that is of great value and deserving regard, and see a beautiful woman, we leave all these things, and with open mouth fix our eyes upon her countenance, and are willing to forsake what we have, that we may enjoy her beauty, and procure it to ourselves. We also leave father and mother, and the earth that nourishes us, and frequently forget our dearest friends, for the sake of women; nay, we be so hardy as to lay down our lives for them. But what will chiefly make you take notice of the strength of women, is this that follows: Do we not take pains and endure a great deal of trouble, and that both by land and sea; and when we have procured somewhat as the fruit of our

labours, do we not bring them to the women, as to our mistresses, and bestow them upon them? Nay, I once saw the king, who is lord of so many people, smitten on the face by Apame, the daughter of Rabsaces Themasius, his concubine, and his diadem taken away from him, and put upon her own head, while he bore it patiently: and when she smiled, he smiled; and when she was angry, he was sad; and according to the changes of her passions he flattered his wife, and drew her to reconciliation by the great humiliation of himself to her, if at any time he saw her displeased at him.'

"And when the princes and rulers looked one upon another, he began to speak about Truth; and he said, 'I have already demonstrated how powerful women are; but both these women themselves, and the king himself, are weaker than truth; for although the earth be large, and the heaven high, and the course of the sun swift, yet are all these moved according to the will of God, who is true and righteous, for which cause we also ought to esteem truth to be the strongest of all things, and that what is unrighteous is of no force against it. Moreover, all things else that have any strength are mortal or short lived, but truth is a thing that is immortal and eternal. It affords us not indeed such a beauty as will wither away by time, nor such riches as may be taken away by fortune, but righteous rules and laws. It distinguishes them from injustice, and puts what is unrighteous to rebuke.'

"So when Zorobabel left off his discourse about Truth, and the multitude had cried aloud that he had spoken the most wisely, and that it was truth alone that had immutable strength, and such as never would wax old, the king was pleased, and arose and kissed

him, and commended him because of his wisdom, and for that prudence wherein he exceeded the rest: And thou shalt sit with me, said the king, and shalt be called my cousin; and he bestowed upon him exceeding great rewards.”*

SYRIA produces red and white wines of a similar quality to Bordeaux. At Damascus the “wine of Tyre” of the Scriptures, called by Ezekiel “wine of Helbon,” is yet made: it is a sweet sort. The grapes of Egypt were much smaller than those of the Holy Land. Dandini, an early Italian traveller, expresses surprise at the unusual size of the grapes he met with near Libanus. “They use no props,” he tells us, “to support the vines, but let them creep along the earth. The wine produced from them is wholesome, and exceedingly pleasant. It is a very surprising thing to observe the bigness of the grape, which is equal to a prune.”—“A cluster, two or three feet in length, will,” observes Schutze, “furnish a supper for a whole family.” Those grown on Mount Libanus, the ancient Lebanon, are thought to be of the same species, and this may help us to comprehend why it was the Israelites felt so great a desire to taste them, and, after they had seen the grapes brought back by the spies sent out by Joshua, to press forward the conquest of Canaan. Some of the wines raised here are delicate and fragrant, but they are mostly *vins cuits*. A variety called *vino de oro*, described as a dry wine, is much commended. The Maronites and natives take their wine freely, and are said to be remarkably convivial. White wines are made at Jerusalem, but they are poor in quality, and are very little noticed.

* Whiston's Josephus, b. xi. ch. iii. See 1 Esdras, ch. iii. iv., where the same incident is related in nearly similar terms.

In the time of our Saviour wine existed in much abundance. That in ordinary use in Palestine and Judea was the pure and simple extract from the grape, agreeable and highly refreshing. It was held in much esteem among the Jews, who dispensed it freely at all their entertainments, as we see ensampled at the marriage-feast of Cana. Matrimony was regarded among that ancient people as an institute of high significance and social import, and its ceremonial was conducted with commensurate form and solemnity. The attendant nuptial festival often extended over seven or eight days, which may sufficiently explain any casual deficiency in this essential element of festivity, as well as the maternal alarm implied in the words "They have no wine,"—an apprehension promptly stilled in so marvellous a manner. Cana was a small town about six miles north-east of Nazareth. It is now called Kefer Kanna, is under Turkish sway, and contains some 300 inhabitants, chiefly Catholics. The natives still pretend to recognise the precise spot where the water was turned into wine, and even to exhibit one of the identical water-pots wherein the miracle was performed. Large stone vessels, it may be added, are said to exist there, the use of which is not only entirely unknown to the present generation, but is beyond the scope of all human tradition.



SECTION XV.

*The Wines of India, China, and
Australia.*

LONG anterior to the date of the Christian era, India was regarded by ancient nations as an earthly paradise of luxury and wealth. Little, however, was really known respecting it prior to the invasion of Alexander the Great; yet a belief generally prevailed that its mountains abounded in all manner of precious stones and gems, that the earth teemed with fruits and flowers of the most delicious and beauteous kind, and that even its very sands were full of grains of shining gold. Similar notions respecting the splendour and opulence of the East continued through succeeding ages down to the gorgeous career of the Great Moguls, when the gradual decline of the empire led the way to European intercourse and commerce, and to its final subjection to British prowess. This rival garden of the Hesperides was fixed on by certain heathen mythologists as the birth-place of Bacchus, and Suradévi was the name accorded to the Hindoo festal goddess. The natives say, observes Diodorus, that Bacchus, having subdued all India, taught them the culture of the earth, the mode of taking honey, the art of pressing grapes and making wine, together with many other social benefits; that he resided in his capital of Nysa,* in the modern

* This city, with another of the same name in Ethiopia, or according to others in Arabia, was held sacred to Bacchus, who was educated there by the resident nymphs. The god made it the seat

Punjaub; that his conquests were easy, and without bloodshed; that he ruled the land with moderation and justice, and after his death was adored as their divine governor and master.

“Before the king tame leopards led the way,
And troops of lions innocently play:
So Bacchus through the conquer’d Indies rode,
And beasts in gambols frisked before the honest god.”

DRYDEN, *Pal. & Arcite*.

This however, fabulous or not, relates only to the territory west of the Sutlej, or as it was anciently termed the Hyphasis river, beyond which the arms of Alexander never penetrated; nor does it appear that the antients ever acquired any knowledge of the countries beyond the limits of their conquests.

India, in the present day, produces little or no wine, except in the northern region between the Sutlej and the Indus: indeed to the southward the climate is too hot and the soil too rich for vine culture, but a beverage of tolerable quality is made in the vicinity of Lahore. During the rule of the great Akbar, whose splendid mausoleum still constitutes the pride and jewel of the famed city of Agra, in Upper Hindostan, the use of wine was ostensibly prohibited; yet it was always obtainable in this the most favoured locality of his empire, and all the way from thence to Cashmere northwards vines are of his empire, and the capital of the nations which he subjugated in the East. As a conqueror he is depicted as of full age, with a beard, a head crowned with ivy, and wearing a *syrrma*, or long triumphal robe. According to some geographers, there were no less than ten places of the name of Nysa. One of these, seated on the coast of Eubœa, a considerable island in the Ægean sea, was famous for its vines, which grew there in so uncommon a manner, that a twig, planted in the ground in the morning, was fabled to have immediately produced fruit, which matured so fast, that in the evening grapes could be gathered full ripe.

grown and wine manufactured, the produce of the latter region bearing some resemblance to Madeira. The hilly district of Nepaul furnishes much useful wine, the best being prepared after the customary process. At Candahar, as in other Mahomedan countries, its use is strictly forbidden; but that drunkenness nevertheless does sometimes occur, even among this grave and abstemious sect, is clear from the penalties attached to that description of offence. A convicted transgressor is seated on an ass, with his face towards the tail, which with Asiatics is considered the deepest degradation possible,* and so paraded through the streets, surrounded by a clamorous crowd of scoffing vagabonds. There can be no doubt that the vine would flourish well on the tablelands and mountains of India,—as on the Neilgherry hills, where the temperature and soil are all that can be desired for that purpose.

The CHINESE are said to make a small quantity of grape wine, though they prefer the product of the still drawn from animal substance,—as in their ‘spirit of lamb’s flesh,’ mashed with milk or rice, said to be very potent, coarse, and disagreeable. They have also a rice-wine, called Sam-Zou, and wine from the palm, in considerable quantities. The grape is mentioned in the annals of China long before the birth of our Saviour, and its produce was always esteemed by that people as the “wine of honour.” The Chinese believe that in the reign of the Emperor Yu, twenty-two centuries before Christ,

* This custom of setting men upon an ass by way of penalty and reproach is still visible at Damascus, in Syria, where, to manifest their dislike towards Christians, the Turks will not suffer them the use of horses, but asses only when they desire to ride into the country.

wine was invented by an agriculturist named I-tye. The government of that time, however, interposed with heavy prohibitory duties, not for the mercenary object of filling their coffers, but lest the people should grow effeminate by over-indulgence in so enticing a liquor. This philanthropic effort of legislation was vain: those who had tasted could not refrain from tasting again, even to excess; and it came to pass, their annals say, that a northern prince named Kya, about fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, in one of his mad freaks filled a lake with the dainty fluid, and made three thousand of his people plunge in bodily, to wallow at ease in the senseless revel. Since that period Imperial mandates have from time to time been issued for rooting up the vines altogether, until the grape became well nigh forgotten throughout the empire.

OCEANIA, the fifth section in the great division of the globe, offers but few facts that call for particular notice on the subject of the culture and welfare of the vine. In many isles of the Eastern seas the plant luxuriates in great bounty, but the juice of its grape is too luscious for making into wine. In Java the vine bears ripe fruit three times in the year. The grape is also grown at Siam, but chiefly for raisins to distil into brandy. On the shores of these tropical waters the vine hitherto has been little valued or understood, and it is in BRITISH AUSTRALIA that the beneficent properties of the grape are likely in those latitudes to receive their earliest and fullest developement, where, indeed, for upwards of thirty years past vineyards have been carefully nurtured and multiplied. No portion of this extensive region as yet under tillage has been found inimical to their culture; and whilst the future is highly promising, as well for

Victoria as both South and West Australia, the success already achieved seems mainly due to the earlier operations of the elder settlement of Sydney, where in the lands that stretch from Beechworth to distant Albury the finest vineyards abound, whose productive powers appear to be very considerable. At the former place there is a thriving plantation belonging to Mr. Zimmerman, about an acre and a quarter in extent. It is well managed, and cultivated like a trim garden. In the season of 1863 he cut for table use from 200 three-year old vines no less than 1600 lbs. of the finest grapes; and as he gets an excellent price on the spot for all the wine he can make, the proceeds of this small estate amply suffice for the comfortable maintenance of himself and family. The success of numerous experiments, extending through several years, confirms the expectation that the vine has found in the antipodes a new home, with local accessories fully adequate to the reproduction of the most useful, if not the highest properties of the grape, and enough experience has been gained to guard against the errors commonly attendant on first attempts at horticultural naturalization in a foreign clime. Advanced and cheering as the prospects and capabilities of the elder province may be fairly considered, still, if we may judge from its rapid strides in this pursuit within the last few years, South Australia seems destined to more than share in the future annals of colonial vignerons fame. A warm predilection for vine culture is there said to prevail; the constant desire to produce superior wine is elevated into earnest and persevering efforts to secure an advance from *better* to *best*; every cottager with half a rood of vines in his garden, strives zealously for improvement, and grudges no labour,

either in the acquirement of knowledge or in downright hard work. The consequence is what might have been anticipated from such concentrated feeling and energy: vine planting in Adelaide has attained to very respectable dimensions, and the area of cultivation still annually on the increase. From an official return made to the local legislature, we learn that the land under this class of culture in March 1862 was no less than 3918 acres; the number of vines in actual bearing, 2,361,574; and the quantity of wine made in the season of 1860-61 is given at 312,021 gallons, being an advance of 70 per cent. on the product of the previous year; whilst the weight of grapes sold for other than wine purposes was 23,299 cwt., as against 23,398 cwt. in 1861. The increase in the number of vines to the same date in 1863 amounted to 25 per cent. over the preceding return, and the quantity of wine made to 5 per cent., of which 20,000 gallons were taken for export. Vineyards continue so to extend on every side, that the grape now ranks next to wheat in importance. The main impediment to an equally progressive advance in quality is ascribed to the fact, that the demand is so active, there is no keeping the wine till it is properly matured, and its better properties fully developed.

The fecundity of the vine in Australia, under favourable circumstances, is somewhat surprising, and is well exemplified in the working of many individual cases. For instance; at Payneham, situated at a short distance from Adelaide, a plot of $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres was planted in 1853. These vines yielded in the harvest of 1858 an average of 800 gallons to the acre; and of such a quality as, twenty months old, to command a ready sale at 7s. per gallon. On the Fairford estate, near the river Sturt

within eight miles of Adelaide, may be seen a flourishing vineyard of five acres, which was planted so recently as 1859. The soil here is a stiffish loam resting on a clay-slate formation. The vines were trained on stakes to standards, the stems being carried 18 inches from the ground. In 1862, from three acres, the only portion then in bearing, 1000 gallons of wine were obtained, remarkable for both richness and delicacy of flavour. And if we may accept the positive statement of the master of Oaklands, a vinery of two acres only on the banks of the same river, and about two miles nearer Adelaide, brought him 5130 gallons of wine, pure juice of the grape, against 4000 gals. in the previous year of 1861. This vineyard was planted some twelve or thirteen years ago, the soil for the most part being an alluvial deposit of great depth, with a substratum of red clay and limestone; the plants are well sheltered, vigorous, and full of growth. Four descriptions of wine are here gathered; viz., a pure Verdelho, a pure Gros Rubico, a pure Roussillon, and a mixed white sort; and the high flavour developed in the produce of 1859-60 demonstrates that abundance is not, as might be supposed, the only recommendation of this prolific plantation. A farm at Clarendon, placed at an elevation of some 700 or 800 feet above the level of the sea, is deserving of mention from the singularly pleasing and extensive view which it commands. On the south, a vine-covered hill towers high above surrounding objects, and appears, as it truly is, a gigantic pyramid of luxuriant verdure. Its sunny slopes and narrow summit are clothed with fruit-bearing shoots, and the dense and waving foliage is unbroken by one barren interval, uninvaded by one incongruous plant. Eastward, the

broad waters of the neighbouring stream, overhung with projecting crags from the hill-side 200 feet above its level, lend tone and grandeur in harmonious contrast to the magnificent sylvan scene. At Hazlehurst, the delightful residence of Mrs. Frances Clark, a vineyard of three acres was planted in 1855, chiefly with the muscatel species. Its growth was vigorous and rapid, and it now presents a dense mass of branch and leaf, heavily laden with fruit. In the lower grounds the vines appear to absolutely revel in their own luxuriance, and such a redundancy of vegetation is rarely seen in so limited a space. On a commanding spot a pleasing device was skilfully effected by uniting, with the aid of a central stake, four vines from opposite corners; the branches so readily and intimately intertwined as to be soon self-supporting, and finally settling in the form of a capacious and shady arbour, the ripe and juicy clusters can be gathered with admirable facility.

It may be worthy of notice, that an experimental drying-ground has been successfully founded on a suitable embankment at Wattleville, distant about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Adelaide, for the purpose of converting grapes into raisins and currants, of which from 8 to 10 cwt. are made annually, preparatory to larger operations.

The species of vine most generally in favour are the *verdeilho*, *riesling*, *shiraz*, *gouais*, and *carbenet*; but numerous others are imported, and find their several admirers and patrons. Many cultivators are of opinion that, however well adapted for a moister region, neither French nor German stocks are suited to the trying climate of Australia, where the fruit is often injured or scorched by the hot and arid winds of summer. Spanish plants, on the contrary, are of a more hardy

constitution, and throw out an exuberant foliage, which serves to shield the fruit from a too powerful sun, and the withering effects of the keen northern blasts. The reputation of the early vintages encountered at first much unmerited prejudice, from the large quantities of immature wine annually forced into the market by growers of insufficient capital, or inadequate cellar-room; but the importance of giving something like age being now more thoroughly appreciated, large and convenient cellars are continuously on the increase, and good storage is no longer a glaring deficiency. The advantage of this prevision is already apparent in the improved qualities constantly springing up to public notice. A pure Riesling, submitted to a scrutiny recently held at the stores of an extensive proprietor, was considered by experienced connoisseurs equal to any Hock procurable in the first European markets; and a Frontignac, made from dried grapes, was highly commended, being full-bodied, soft, and well flavoured, of a deep amber colour, transparent and bright as burnished gold. A rich and luscious muscat of Alexandria was further distinguished by a powerful and agreeable aroma; whilst some of the red table sorts, it was thought, would fairly vie with the higher marks of French Burgundy.

Nor is this all, for the gold-mining denizens of Australia Felix, unwilling to be thought lukewarm or indifferent to this pastoral pursuit, by the promulgation of numerous instances of successful culture within a radius of some six or seven miles of Melbourne have recently announced their claims to expectant vigneron repute, which further serves to demonstrate the fact that the vine is fast becoming, not only a favourite, but a profitable branch of farming. On the heights of

Hawthorn, on the slopes and undulations of South Yarra and Boroondara, at Heidelberg, at Flemington, and at Brighton, rows upon rows of vines spread their leafy charms, and yield year by year an increasing harvest of delicious fruit. Some of the grounds have been established several years, one of ten acres near Flemington having been planted by Mr. Fawkner as far back as 1840: in the year 1848 he made 2000 gallons of excellent wine. The greater portion, however, are of more recent formation. The largest plantation yet laid down is that of M. de Dollon at Gardiner's Creek, which is twenty-six acres in extent. Its chief features exhibit a succession of gentle undulations, affording good natural drainage to a soil of clay and gravel. Three years since there was not a vine on the place: the 70,000 roots now planted are already in partial bearing, and the proprietor's first vintage realized 4000 gallons, chiefly a light Burgundy, which promises to be a good fruity wine, of a pale rose colour; whilst his four or five hogsheads of red Hermitage bid fair to become in due time a noble wine. At Longfield, a vineyard of five acres is doing exceedingly well. The ground here is a fine penetrable clay, in which the vines appear to rejoice greatly, the drainage being easy and at the same time effectual. 200 gallons per acre is the prospective estimate of future returns from this estate. At South Yarra, the crop of last season from a plantation of six acres, ten years under cultivation, was nearly twelve tons, all of which found ready sale for table use. A vineyard $12\frac{1}{2}$ acres in extent, belonging to Mr. Gordon of Brighton, is also in a very flourishing and productive state. Here the soil of two-thirds of the area is a rich alluvium to a depth of eighteen inches, covering a stratum of gravel

of equal thickness, beneath which runs a bed of stiff clay. In the season of 1863, besides sending a large quantity of grapes to market, the proprietor obtained 1500 gallons of wine, one half of which was white Tokay. From the refuse grapes, stalks, and other waste a brisk beverage is produced called *piquette*, which is most acceptable to work-people, and indeed to any thirsty persons in the heat of summer; and a small quantity of brandy is distilled from the rejected pulp of the crushing-press. Other cases of prosperous cultivation might be quoted, but sufficient perhaps has been already stated to demonstrate, that whatever may be in due course of time the vinous guerdon of Australasia for other and distant parts of the world, she is in a fair way of satisfactorily providing for the need and comfort of her own increasing and opulent population. The demand, indeed, for home-grown produce has become general throughout the colonies, and notwithstanding that prices, even in that auriferous region, are deemed too high, the consumption is extending rapidly.

Such is the present position, as well as some of the prominent incidents connected with the labours of this energetic and vine-loving community. Encouraging and satisfactory, however, as they may appear, and pointing (in the minds of sanguine residents at least) to the rich redundancy of a new 'land of promise,' it must be admitted that time is still requisite for fully stamping its vinous produce with those properties which alone can confer on it permanent reputation and commercial value. The richest productions of nature cannot be improvised. Step by step, and by slow degrees alone can these laudable efforts rise towards the fulness of perfection; yet the onward progress that is marked with constant

improvement in the chief qualities that distinguish the higher order of vintages,—body, flavour, and durability, can hardly fail to arrive at a highly gratifying result. Of the wines that have yet reached Europe, the characteristics of the white indicate a close affinity to the produce of Hochheim and the Rheingau, whilst the red bear some resemblance to those of the Côte d'Or. In quality they are so far advanced as to have won highly favourable notice from the Paris Exhibition of 1854. As yet this branch of industry is too recent to furnish any considerable foreign supply, and none beyond a few experimental consignments have been exported from the colony; but that durability is one of its virtues is evidenced by the fact that a quantity, shipped without any admixture of spirit, after a voyage to Europe and back was found on its arrival in Australia to be perfectly sound. As the climate is well suited to the growth of the grape, its culture, in the hands of an active and prosperous people, may be hereafter destined to become of considerable commercial import.



SECTION XVI.

The Wines of Columbia.

WERE anything needed to prove the universality of the gift of the vine to man, its presence on the discovery of the New World will amply testify to the unrestricted bounty of the supreme Giver. Although it has hitherto attracted little attention or celebrity, wine is produced in much abundance both on the north and south continent, from indigenous as well as transplanted varieties. The wild vines on the Ohio attain a prodigious size, the trunks of some of them being from seven to ten inches in diameter, with luxuriant branches pendant some sixty or seventy feet from the tops of the tallest tenants of the forest. Vines trained on mulberry and sassafras trees formed a feature in the scenery of Delaware in 1648; and in the year 1683 William Penn planted a vineyard in the vicinity of Philadelphia. Some French colonists having in 1769 succeeded in obtaining 100 hogsheads of serviceable wine from a wild American grape, attention has since been uniformly directed to the native plant as the only one suitable to wine-making, experience having demonstrated the utter failure of every attempt to make good wine in America from stocks imported from Europe.

The seaboard generally of the United States, from its low winter temperature, and the humidity of both soil and atmosphere, is unfavourable to vine-culture; but on the settlement of the lands lying to the west of the

Alleghany mountains, it was found that the grape might be there grown with a fair prospect of success, and a palatable red wine was made from native fruit towards the end of the last century, when some Swiss settlers cultivated the vine in the states of Ohio and Indiana with considerable address. The crop in 1811 furnished 2700 gallons from a vineyard only planted in 1805, and is said to have resembled Bordeaux in quality. About the same period enterprising efforts were made to establish vine culture on a still larger scale on the river Kentucky, but the experiment being unattended with commensurate success, it was for a time abandoned as hopeless. The cause of the failure has not been fully determined, but it is perhaps justly ascribed to undue moisture, occasioned by the excessive rain-falls that periodically occur between the months of April and October.

The cultivation of the vine was an object of early solicitude to the first colonists of North America, and its gradual developement has been followed up with considerable energy and success. Wine is now made in almost every State of the Union, but the native vines generally prove defective in the saccharine element. The richest in this respect is the *scuppernong*, a favourite plant in the southern States, but the wine made even from this species requires to be sweetened by the admixture of syrup or honey, and to be strengthened by the addition of spirit to counteract a presumptive deficiency of alcohol. The indigenous stocks appear to have their geographical limits, for the *scuppernong* will not ripen north of Virginia, nor the *fox* grape of the north thrive in the lower parts of Carolina and Georgia. Upwards of thirty varieties of the grape are

now raised in the different States, being for the most part white, and closely resembling each other. In one important particular they have all been found to differ from the vines of Europe; viz., that pruning appears to produce no beneficial effect on the fruit; and when left to their natural growth, they are more productive than under artificial training, however skilful or scientifically applied. It was not until the year 1826 that the *catawba*, a native American grape found growing spontaneously in a garden at Georgetown, near Washington, first attracted special notice. This fertile variety has gradually supplanted all others, and for wine purposes is almost universally adopted throughout the United States. It gives a very peculiar musky flavour to the wine, displeasing indeed to many when first tasted; but the dislike is quickly subdued by use, and it is much relished in Missouri, where it sells readily at prices that would be deemed exorbitant in the wine-countries of Europe. Numerous other wild species are known in the States: some of them may one day rival the *catawba*, which at present is almost the only grape grown on a large scale for wine. The banks of the Ohio are studded with vineyards, between 1500 and 2000 acres being planted in the immediate vicinity of Cincinnati, with every probability of a gradual expansion. In Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee, Arkansas, and in full two-thirds of the western States, plantations of more or less promise and extent have been formed; and if the culture of the vine should continue to be encouraged and improved, the period may not be far distant when wine will be produced in these lands as cheaply and abundantly as in Europe. Whether American growths will ever become an important article of

export, must depend mainly on the price at which they can be shipped; but the home market is already so vast and active, that many years will probably elapse before wine will be raised in sufficient quantities to turn the current of trade, and convert the Columbian communities into exporters of an article which has hitherto been supplied to them chiefly from abroad.

In Mexico, where the small wild grape is indigenous, the Spaniards, as early as 1572, introduced the European plant, from which good second-class wines are obtained; and California, where the vine flourishes in great perfection, has numerous plantations, which yield an agreeable red variety. The island of Cuba rears an abundance of wild grapes; these secrete an acrid taste, but afford a light, cool, sharp wine. The trunks of the vines are there often as large as a man's body, and with their branches intertwined, extend in thick woods over leagues of surface. Wine long ago was made in Louisiana, and in the French colonies of America. In Florida, also, according to the testimony of Sir John Hawkins, a considerable quantity, of an agreeable taste, was produced from a native grape as far back as the year 1564; and Laudonnière says, in recounting his voyage to Florida in 1562, that the "trees were environed about with vines bearing grapes, so that the number would suffice to make the place habitable." "Master Ralph Lane," the head of the first colony established in Virginia, wrote in 1585, that he had found in that country "grapes of suche greatnesse, yet wilde, as France, Spaine, nor Italie have no greater," though this, perhaps, savours of a little exaggeration.

Large quantities of sparkling wine are made both at Cincinnati and St. Louis in imitation of Champagne,

which, under the name of "sparkling Catawba," sells readily at four shillings the bottle. It goes through exactly the same complicated process, and with as much care, as in France, which will serve to account for the high price. The Catawba somewhat resembles Rhenish wine in appearance, and is of the same light straw colour; but it has the peculiar musky flavour above adverted to, and more body. The State of New York produces the Isabella, another favourite vintage, which with the Catawba divides the public favour. These wines are quite distinct in character from any of European origin, and are said to exceed in delicacy and flavour every other growth. They are not rich in alcohol, containing, in fact, the smallest per centage of spirit of any wine in the world. Looking to quantity alone, the region most productive is California, where, more than a century since, the preparation of wine was carefully superintended by the missionaries from the mother-country; but in character it is less pure and wholesome than the wines of Ohio.

SOUTH AMERICA abounds in vineyards. Wine formerly was made in Paraguay, but it was forbidden to be manufactured in the Brazils during the sovereignty of Portugal in that colony. Vines are grown at numerous places between Buenos Ayres and Mendoza: they are remarkably productive, and bear fine fruit wherever the owners take the necessary trouble with the cultivation. The clusters of grapes are remarkably fine and rich, and are interwoven with the pear, apple, and peach in the most luxuriant manner,—all in great perfection. Excellent secondary wines are made at Mendoza, which form an article of considerable traffic with Buenos Ayres, a thousand miles distant across the Pampas. They are

transported even during the summer heats, and so far from spoiling, they prove all the better for the journey. The wine is not carried in skins, which so taint and disqualify the produce of some districts in the mother country, but is conveyed in small barrels slung on each side of a mule, and the quantity thus sent is considerable. A sweet kind, resembling Malaga, is also made there, for which they suspend the grapes for some time in bunches, to mature after they are gathered. Their wines of the first quality include both red and white sorts, and are held in much esteem, the latter bearing in the United States the price of Madeira. Brandy is also distilled from these wines in considerable quantity.

Mendoza, one of the largest cities of the Argentine Republic, is situated at the foot of the eastern slope of the Cordilleras. Inhabited by a race distinguished for their lively manners and comely proportions, — athletic though slender, — the youthful señoras who frequent the evening promenade on the *grande plaza* are said to present to the gaze of the admiring stranger an animated assemblage graceful as breathing sculpture.* On approaching the suburbs, fields of vineyards and clover greet the eye on every side, and the gardens of the city are filled with some of the best muscatels in the world, both as to size and quality. Several species of grape are there cultivated, including a black variety, as well as the red and white: the vines are not permitted to exceed four feet in height, and the grounds are freely irrigated.

Unhappily, this smiling and bountiful aspect was destined to be of no long duration; for on the 20th of

* *Vide* the remarkable tale of *Elsie Venner*, by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

March, 1861, the town was visited by an earthquake of unusual intensity, which, overwhelming every building, public or private, reduced in a few brief seconds an extensive city to a mass of shapeless ruins. Such was its resistless power, that not a house or church, or even a shed, was left standing more than six feet above the surface of the ground. Out of a population of 12,000 human beings, 10,000 were instantaneously engulfed beneath the yawning foundations; and of 2000 rescued, at least 1500 sustained grievous injuries from the ponderous materials everywhere falling around them. The streets being narrow and the buildings lofty, the startled tenants, paralysed with terror and alarm, attempted too late to seek for refuge in the open courts and squares, and the scene that presented itself immediately after the first vibration was intensified and deplorable beyond conception.

Situate in a region eminently volcanic, the very heart of the shock must have centred within the town itself. Hoarse subterranean thunders deafened the air; domestic animals in frantic terror rushed howling through the narrow labyrinths and vacant spaces; the earth opened, and vomited forth floods of water; while, to crown the terrors of the night, flames burst from the smouldering wreck, and consumed each upheaved dwelling with its dead, its maimed, and its dying. Six hundred unhappy beings were burnt alive, yet their sufferings, terrible to contemplate as they were, must have been brief and merciful compared with the agony sustained by others, who for sixteen days endured a living tomb beneath the smoking fragments. Broken limbs were among the least deplorable of the calamities encountered; crushed bones, gorged and lacerated wounds

for many succeeding months retired each night with a feeling of unmitigated apprehension and insecurity. No precaution, no amount of earthly foresight avails against the mysterious visitor, who comes at dawn, at noon, or midnight in transcendent force, and in a few seconds levels to the ground the proudest monuments of human ingenuity and skill.

The vines of Peru afford delicious grapes of various kinds in the vicinity of Lima, but, from the great demand for table use, little or no wine is made near that city. Those of Chili produce better fruit for wine than Peru, yet as the consumption is small, the vine-grounds in that province are much neglected. The red grape is the most cultivated, and is remarkable for richness and fragrance, the muscatel far exceeding that of Spain, as well in the fruit as the wine it yields. The vines are trained *en espalier*. Nothing can equal the beauty of some of the clusters of the Chilian grape. A bunch has been gathered so large as of itself to fill a basket, and the trunks of some of the pollard class attain an immense size. The wines manufactured in both provinces are in colour white, red, and purple. Those of Chili are the most approved: the produce of Pisco sells the readiest, and is highly esteemed. In the southern States the olive tree flourishes in extreme profusion, and yields finer oil than most other countries; but the court of Madrid always looked with an unfavourable eye on the cultivation of the vine, the olive, and the mulberry, and at one time orders were sent out to uproot the former in the northern districts of Mexico, because the merchants of Cadiz complained of a diminution in the consumption of Spanish wines.

The principal diseases to which the vine is subject in

America are rot and mildew. The former is very destructive, especially to the catawba. It usually appears at the latter end of June, after continued heavy rain followed by a hot sweltering sun; it strikes suddenly with fatal effect, destroying at times two-thirds of the crop in a few hours. It is supposed to proceed from an excess of moisture about the roots of the plant, sandy soils with a gravelly substratum being usually exempt from its attacks, especially where there is a thorough circulation of air. The mildew precedes the rot, but has not hitherto proved so fatal as the latter malady. No remedy yet tried has proved successful, and opinions differ widely as to the true nature of the blight,—some maintaining that it is merely a variety of the European *oidium*. That it is caused by a description of fungus, which adheres to and gradually destroys the berry, is not denied; but whether it is a distinct and wholly American disease has given rise to a great deal of learned and undecisive controversy. Its ravages in 1858 were very calamitous, as much as two-thirds, and in some instances three-fourths of the crop having been destroyed by the mildew; but there is not any reason to apprehend that the distemper will assume a permanent or abiding character.



SECTION XVII.

On the Choice and Preservation of Wine.

THE “generous juice of the grape was doubtless bestowed upon man by his beneficent Creator to impart health and vigour to his physical energies, and a wholesome cheerfulness to his soul; and if he would wish to avoid enervating the one or brutalizing the other, he will do well to eschew all unsound or vitiated wine, which has ever manifested itself in the ‘living temples’ of its votaries in the character of manifold diseases. ‘Strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise;’ but *pure* wine upon a *healthy* stomach is grateful and precious as the light of truth and the exercise of discretion to a sound and well-regulated mind.” *

The due exercise of a discriminating and reliable judgment in the choice of wines is no easy task, especially to those unacquainted with the nice shades of distinction, or unused to extensive and frequent opportunities of comparison. The difficulty may be stated as twofold: in the first place, no two persons entertain precisely similar notions as to the character of any particular vintage; and, secondly, the wines of the same estate will vary with the fluctuations of inconstant seasons. Age, care in storing, or mere accident, may cause a change in the flavour or bouquet of any given description of wine sufficient to be clearly perceptible

* *Mem. of a Tour in France*, by J. H. Holdsworth, M.D.

to a connoisseur, though little noticeable by persons unfamiliar with that vintage. It is not improbable that much of this diversity proceeds from the way in which the palate has been exercised: thus strong liquors blunt its sensibility, and disqualify it for the perception of the more delicate rivalry of the lighter growths. A person accustomed only to bad or indifferent wines will often form a very erroneous estimate of the better kinds, and sometimes even give the preference to the former. A traveller, on arriving at the end of his journey exhausted by fatigue and thirst, is apt to ascribe the most delightful properties to the first ordinary wine presented to him, which, under other circumstances, he perhaps would hardly have been induced to tolerate; and a continued use of the inferior products of one country, might lead him to overrate the vinous gifts of another. Whole nations, indeed, may be occasionally misled by so plausible a prejudice.

A purchaser should always, if possible, decide for himself, and select from the samples most agreeable to his palate. The taste is the only true criterion by which a safe opinion can be formed; yet a correct and unvarying palate is a rare gift. Experience will best implant on the memory what are the appropriate attributes of eminent growths, and lead the judgment to a correct and satisfactory preference. The particular impression of the moment, however, is so liable to be affected by the passing state of bodily health, or by the last substance taken into the mouth, that it is difficult to preserve it unimpaired. Sweet or spiced food eaten some time previously will materially disturb the faculty of discrimination. Many resort to cheese,

but after that convenient provocative, all wines will carry an agreeable relish; whilst such as habitually indulge in the use of strong vintages or spirits, lose much of that quickness and nicety of perception indispensable in recognising the more refined harmony of superlative growths. Constant familiarity with the choice and delicate kinds will alone confer the power of discerning minuter differences in aroma, bouquet, and characteristic flavour. The taste should preserve an equilibrium between differing and opposite qualities,—such as body, piquancy, fine colour, limpidity, strength, and maturity,—in perfect union without the slightest approach to harshness, attended by a fragrant odour, a silky softness, and the absence of all coarse or earthy savour.

To determine accurately, however, between contending differences and qualities of varying samples is a talent possessed by few. The contrariety both of taste and preference among individuals is proverbial and obvious; whilst the difficulty of a clear definition is greatly augmented by the poverty of our language to express suitably the subtle distinctions of vinous character and quality. Even if our nomenclature of tastes were much more copious than it is, the flavour of wines is so varied, and their respective divergence and combinations so numerous, that it would still be a very difficult task to designate them with precision. In most wines, it is true, certain qualities predominate, and these may be readily described, especially when the wine is new. Port, for example, may be termed bitter, rough, and astringent; Rhine produce, austere and sharp; Malmsey, bitter-sweet, &c.; but what words will adequately indicate that peculiar ethereal aroma that distinguishes

each of them when fully mellowed by age, and which is only developed by long keeping? Again, those properties of wine recognised by the organ of smell are equally various and difficult of definition, and are often only apparent after being bottled a number of years. The French and other cultivators have terms for denoting the several properties peculiar to their wines, and although some of them are too idiomatic to be easily available, others are sufficiently expressive for ready comprehension and adoption by the English connoisseur. The words *delicate*, or *fine*, as applied to the produce of Champagne, require no explanation; *bouquet* interprets the fine odour emitted by first-class wines only, and is easily perceptible when the cork is drawn. In some of the choicest French growths it is highly rich and fragrant: it is not a single perfume, and derives the name from this circumstance, arising apparently from a perfect union of several agreeable odours. *Aroma*, again, is applied to their natural and inherent perfume and flavour, or as imparted by the infusion of aromatic or foreign substances; *vélocité* implies full of softness on the palate; *sève*, the entire flavour of the wine as developed on being swallowed, combining both the spirituous quality and aromatic particles, which are liberated and volatilized as soon as it meets the warmth of the mouth. *Velouté* means wine of good colour and body, smooth on the palate; *fumeux* those quickly affecting the head from alcohol, and not from carbonic gas, as Champagne; to the latter the term *montant* is applied. *Vins d'entremets* are table wines, taken between the dishes before the dessert; *plat*, signifies when flat from want of innate strength; and *vinades* are small wines, made by

adding water to the must and then pressing it, generally consumed by labourers.

In England the influence of fashion is very potential, and whilst it constantly tends to regulate and govern the public taste, no criterion exists for testing the worth of its judgment or caprice. At times, too, the example or eccentricity of a leading person of *ton* will occasion a sort in but little estimation, and perhaps worthless in reality, to become the leading wine of the table for a season. It is this fashion, or accident, and not a true appreciation of vinous excellence, that too often determines a fleeting popularity in favour of some particular growth; whilst a lurking prejudice is ever active in disparaging and denouncing all articles of luxury tainted with the ban of vulgar plenty and cheapness. Yet, notwithstanding there is no recognised standard of taste in wines, and popular notions are liable to inconsiderate fluctuation, there are properties essential to good wine, with respect to which most persons will agree. Some like the sweet, others the dry wines; some the light, others the stronger kinds; but no purchaser will choose a flat and insipid vintage in preference to another distinguished by fulness of body and richness of flavour, or overlook the equally indispensable requisites of firmness and durability, — qualities, however, seldom found combined except in first-rate wines, which, being raised in very limited quantity, and often the produce of private estates, sell at high prices, and are attainable with difficulty.

The first object to be sought for in the selection of wine, next to the spontaneous approval of the purchaser, is its purity. Whatever the region that produces it, whatever the class, if it be adulterated with any thing

foreign to its natural growth, it ought to be rejected. The number of hands through which wine usually passes before it reaches the consumer, exposes it to many hazards; whilst the great difference of price between the higher grades and the inferior sorts offers to the dealer many temptations to tamper with their integrity, against which no buyer is wholly secure. To distinguish genuine wine from another that is mixed requires much experience, particularly when of a second or third-rate quality; yet it would not always be possible to drink certain wines, unless they were softened by admixture with others of a kindlier character, although in all other respects they may be excellent. Hermitage, in France, is often added to Claret, in order to strengthen the product of a weaker vintage. Sometimes the grapes do not ripen uniformly, even when of an approved species, and yet the product is sound: with such, better and older wines identical in character are added to the new, and both the taste and the strength are thereby improved.

The blendings practised by French merchants have not for their object an imitation of the leading wines of their vineyards, but simply to correct defects in particular samples, or to obtain by this means a quality that will suit the consumer at a price less onerous than that demanded for the finest growths. The difference between good and genuine high-class wines and those so mixed is sometimes such, as to make the latter preferred by those who judge from primary and transient impressions. A superior vintage, when new, commonly retains a certain rawness of taste less pleasing than one composed of two sorts judiciously combined, and in so commingling their wines the French but adapt

their wares to the respective markets. Those sent to England are very different from such as are consigned to Russia, and both are treated differently from those intended for Paris or home use. Hence it arises that visitors to the Continent are often puzzled at not finding there the same peculiarities of flavour and character they have been previously accustomed to. The first growths of Bordeaux drunk in France do not resemble those usually sold in London; the latter contain a dash of the wine of the south of France or Spain, which imparts the difference thus noticed.

Wines differ considerably in their power of endurance, and the time requisite for their fullest perfection. Some will keep well for a very lengthened period, but any excess of age is always at the expense of some of their vinous properties. Mere age is not the sole criterion for wine in its highest excellence, though a certain time is necessary to carry it to the state when it is best for the table. Wines lose their fragrance when kept too long. There is always an eligible middle term, equally removed from the extremes of maturity and decay, in which the finer kinds should be drunk. As a general rule, harsh wines, as Rhine and Moselle, have most bouquet; and spirituous wines, as Port and Sherry, are apt to undergo in time a considerable change in colour and flavour. Effervescing wines usually retain their quality only to a limited period, from the excess of inherent carbonic acid; most French wines are also affected by time, and lose much of their original character. Clarets are thought to drink best when about ten years old. Second-rate French wines are often passed off by the dealer for the best, and the approximation is sometimes so close, that instances do occur

when an experienced native only can recognise the difference. For Spanish wines a good age is needed to bring out their latent qualities, reduce their ardency, and secure that rich mellowness so grateful to the palate. In all good wine tartar precipitates itself in the form of small crystals: it communicates no bad taste, nor renders it cloudy, but rather helps to sustain it in good condition. In dealing with all new wines, it is essential to consider whether they will keep or depreciate, and to what variations the flavour may be liable. Without these and similar innate properties, much disappointment and loss may ensue; for some that appear good and bright when tasted might not retain their distinctive qualities a year, whilst others that at first seem by no means promising may prove in the end excellent. Neither can the enduring aroma of the choicest growths be imparted at will, because their delicacy is not to be counterfeited.

In the selection of wines for the table there is ample room for the exercise of cultivated taste and judgment, as social enjoyment may be greatly heightened by a considerate attention to the varying circumstances under which they are taken. With wines as with meats, the serving of the most delicate first will tend to diminish consumption, with augmented comfort perhaps to all present, whilst the nature of the viands provided will go far to determine what vintages should be chosen. It is a safe general rule to take white wine with white meats, and red with brown. Good sound Claret, which is now obtainable at a moderate cost, is an excellent dinner beverage. After soup, a glass of Sherry or Madeira may be recommended with advantage; with fish, Pouilly or Chablis should be preferred. Afterwards it is best to keep to one sort, and that of the lightest. When Cham-

pagne is introduced, it should be put forward early,—say soon after removal of the fish,—as well to enliven the guests, as to heighten its enjoyment before the nicer sensibilities of the palate are weakened, for no wines promote cheerfulness so effectually as the sparkling and effervescent kinds. After cheese, a glass of generous Burgundy or old Port will impart a grateful relish; and for a luncheon of oysters nothing can equal the more delicate pale varieties of France and Hungary.

Full-bodied white wines, such as Madeira or Sherry, might be decanted a few hours before dinner; Port may be brought into a warm room at the same time, but should not be drawn long before use. French and German vintages must remain uncorked till called for. In warm weather strong wines are too heating, and should be indulged in sparingly; nor would it be amiss to keep in mind that costly wines are not necessarily the most beneficial, and that many sound and wholesome growths are within our reach at a very inconsiderable expenditure. A tumbler of light Médoc, diluted with water, is far more invigorating for breakfast than warm tea or coffee, especially after smart morning exercise. When the strength of wine or other liquor is intended to be lowered by the addition of water, the latter should be the first poured into the glass, and the wine immediately after. Most of the fixed air contained in the liquor will be fully absorbed by the water, and the mixture will not have that flat or mawkish flavour often recognised if the wine is first placed in the empty glass, by which the aroma is diffused, and a large portion of the more delicate properties are lost.

But little advantage will attend the acquisition of the best wine, if due care be not taken to preserve and

bring it to that maturity and perfection which it can alone derive from time,—a maxim, indeed, of prehistoric origin, for we read in the gospel of St. Luke, that “No man having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better.”—v. 39. Wines appear to be mellowed in two ways,—either by the disengagement of a portion of their aqueous particles and such ingredients as obscured the delicacy of their flavour and aroma, or by the more intimate union and concentration of the remaining component parts. All the stronger kinds, particularly such as have been fermented in the vat, yield a large sediment in the wood, and it is only when all the mucilaginous matter, with a large portion of their tartar, has been deposited, that they become fit for bottling. After they are laid down, the precipitation of the tartar continues in a slight degree, and, in the red wines, generally carries along with it a portion of the colouring matter, forming a dark crust on that side of the bottle which happens to be undermost. Certain vintages, however, are less apt to form this crust than some others; in Port wines it is always present, but in those of Médoc it is scarcely perceptible, at least when properly matured and fined before bottling, and their colour acquires a deeper tinge as the deposition of tartar proceeds. In white varieties, on the other hand, the tartar is eliminated in the form of pellucid crystals adhering to the cork and side of the glass, and consisting generally of pure supertartrate of potash, but sometimes containing other saline substances which may have been in combination with it.

Wines of strength, intended to mellow in the wood, should be put into the largest barrels that can be conveniently procured, for rough vintages ripen best in a

large body, but those of a delicate and lighter growth are more advantageously stored in smaller vessels, and should be bottled as soon as they attain a suitable condition, for this class gains little by long continuance in the cask. The preservation and amelioration of wine in bottle mainly depend upon the maturity it has acquired in the wood, and its freedom from all mucilaginous impurities. On the first fermentation the primary constituents are partially decomposed, and converted into alcohol; it is only during the second or insensible fermentation that new combinations yield sufficient firmness to resist further decomposition and decay. All wines may thus be regarded as bearing within themselves the germs of degeneration, whilst with equal truth it might be affirmed that they are endued with the principles of improvement and endurance. With respect to the time requisite to bring them to their full maturity, wines are said to follow the same law as that observed in organized beings; viz., that their duration is proportionate with the time necessary for their complete developement. Thus, such as attain their highest perfection at the end of two years, go off at five or six; while those requiring ten or twelve years to fully mature, will keep thirty or forty years, or even more. White wines, for the most part, are ripe for bottling earlier than red. The Rhine wines may remain in cask for many years. First-rank Burgundies should be bottled one year after the vintage; while the higher-coloured and more generous sorts are better if retained in the wood four or five years. Bordeaux will mellow in bulk for ten years. Strong-bodied wines require to be kept a considerable time in bottle, in which state they best attain perfection.

Most wines not bottled when fully ripe, and in proper time to preserve them, deteriorate in quality, and soon lose their distinctive properties. For this operation the early part of March is the most preferable. Although wines when in bottle, are seemingly cut off from all external influences, they are still subject to subsidence or decomposition, — whether by the dispersion of their alcohol or other leading constituent, it is not easy to determine. Under this supplementary kind of fermentation the richer wines improve, and do not evince the same tendency to acescency as the thinner sorts. The precipitation of wine in bottle is only a continuance of that which commenced in the cask, and those which deposit most freely are observed to be the most durable. In their final stage of preservation they all form some deposit, varying from coarse crust to an almost invisible sediment. Bottled wines, also, even when corked in the most careful manner, are subject to the action of external causes, and every precaution should be taken to prevent the access of air by means of the cork; if sealed, let the glass be included in the coating of wax. When laid down, they should be placed in a perfectly horizontal position, so that the liquid may always be in contact with the cork. Wine that is pricked, or has a flat, dead taste, indicates that the external air has obtained access,—by the cork if in bottle, by a loose or imperfect bung if in cask.

In the nature of the finer class of wines there is something exceedingly sensitive. Thunder, the rolling of heavy bodies over the cellar, and some things scarcely credible, are found to occasion the renewal of fermentation. The wines of Portugal, however, are so hardy, that even the vaults under the streets of the metropolis

will scarcely affect their quality ; but those of Bordeaux, Champagne, and the Rhône should be placed in store where no motion or vibration of the ground can affect them. As wines are wonderfully susceptible of all that impregnates the surrounding air, neither stale fruit, flowers, plants, nor other vegetable produce should be permitted to remain in a wine-cellar, as they are apt to impart an ill flavour, or to generate acidity. They should also be removed as far as possible from sewers, and the air of courts where noxious trades are carried on. These, in wet weather, would be sure to influence the wine, and promote a tendency to acetous fermentation. Deep cellarage is best for the lighter vintages of France; the produce of the south ripen better in warmer situations. Cold or hot weather is equally prejudicial to the removal of most wines. At all times keep the cellar dry and clean, with an equal temperature throughout the year.

In decanting wine for use, be particularly mindful of the importance of a steady hand; for however good it may be in itself, it is always better for coming to table perfectly bright. As some kind of deposit is invariably found in the bottle, it should not be drawn closer than one glass; this natural subsidence, however, must not be taken as a sign of inferiority or impurity, nor need the small surplus be regarded as waste, for an ullage bottle may be made to serve many useful purposes in domestic economy. Strainers are very objectionable; they frequently impart a mouldy taint.

Chemical analyses have been made from time to time, with a view to determine the relative proportions of the alcoholic strength of various wines and liquors; but from the dissidence occasioned by inequality of the

seasons, the condition of the fruit, and other causes, the result must be regarded as an approximation only, as they differ in many points from each other. According to the experiments conducted by Mr. Brande, the average alcoholic strength resident in various liquors may be taken as ranging thus,—

	Per cent.		Per cent.
Port (av. of 7 samples)	22.06	Malmsey Madeira	18.40
Sherry (4 samples)	19.17	Lacryma Christi	19.70
Madeira	24.42	Marsala (2 samples)	25.09
Burgundy (4 samples)	14.57	Whiskey	54.00
Champagne (4 samples)	12.61	Rum	53.68
Claret (4 samples)	12.91	Brandy	53.39
Hermitage	15.75	Gin	51.60
Roussillon	19.00	Perry	7.26
Rüdesheimer	12.22	Cider	7.84
Hochheimer	14.37	Ale	8.68
Cape Madeira	22.94	Brown Stout	6.20
Constantia	19.20	London Porter	4.20

Professor Mulder, an analyst in high repute, ranks Port as the richest in alcohol, and Madeira as the next. Liqueur wines as a rule, he says, are stronger than red wines, and Benicarlo, Sauterne, Jurançon, and Lacryma Christi, all contain from 12 to 15 per cent. (Centigrade) of natural alcohol. Red French wines contain less,—from 9 to 14 per cent.; good Bordeaux, 10 to 12; and Champagne, 10 to 11 per cent. Rhine wine varies from 6 to 12,—but in general may be taken at 9 to 10 per cent. The residuum of Port wine contains an acidulous extract, and more tartaric acid than Madeira, and Sherry less than either. The preference given to Port, on account of its astringency, is thought to be objectionable, from its tartaric acid promoting indigestion and irritability of the viscera. Sherry appears better fermented, and for that reason freer from acrid or saccharine matter; consequently it is more suitable where a tendency to such irritability is observable.

Be the right proportions what they may, the value of wine as a medicine should not be overlooked, for in many complaints it is often of more service than any thing doctors can prescribe. In fevers of the typhoid class, in weakness or debility, and any prostration or deficiency of the vital energies, there is nothing equal to the restorative powers derivable from a discreet administration of sound and pure wine. It fortifies the system against the insidious attacks of intermittent and malignant fevers; it allays nervous excitability, and alleviates the infirmities attendant on old age. Hippocrates, that prince of physicians, often commends the employment of wine with a freedom and boldness that many of his disciples are afraid to follow: his dietetic regimen and vinous potions were the principal aids on which he relied when his purpose was either to restrain or raise the momentum of the blood, and its great utility has been established from a very early period by medical writers in all ages. The experience of more recent times tends to confirm the wisdom of the Grecian sage; and these pages cannot be more fittingly brought to a close than by adverting to the special hygienic virtues ascribed to some of the leading and best-known vintages, further based as they are on the testimony of eminent physiologists, whose published opinions are here reflected.

In modern practice first-class Sherries, especially such as are old and dry, seem to be preferred to most others for medicinal purposes, on account of their almost perfect freedom from acidity. Of these the *Vino de Pastã* of Spain is considered as the finest and most wholesome of agreeable tonics. It is the ordinary beverage of the native grandees, but the quantity being

limited, the price is proportionally high, and the genuine difficult to obtain. Amontillado, from its more perfect fermentation, and Manzanilla, from the entire absence of saccharine matter, even to austerity, will agree with invalids when many others fail. The moderate use of Champagne assists in the cure of hypochondriacal affections, and other nervous complaints where an active and diffusive stimulus is needed. It is also valued for its high diuretic powers. Care, however, should be taken, when applied in cases of illness, that it is good in quality, well matured, and not less than from five to ten years old. Of the medical properties of Burgundy little has been written. The better red sorts were formerly prescribed in affections of the chest, and are administered with advantage in disorders requiring stimulant and sub-astringent tonics. Claret possesses less aroma and spirit, but is more bracing than Burgundy, assimilates more readily, and is the preferable wine for daily use: of light wines it is one of the most perfect and least intoxicating. By the Germans, Hock is considered inimical to the doctor. The delicate dry wines of the Rhine and Moselle are less heating than most others, and are esteemed by the natives for their sustaining properties in such fevers as are attended by a low pulse and much nervous exhaustion. In cases of calculus and other diseases of the bladder, Rhine wine is found very efficacious. In Cyprus old thick wine is still a remedy for the ague, so prevalent in some of the Greek islands. Of Port wine the merits are pretty well known and generally appreciated as invigorating to the body and exhilarating to the mind; but the following remarks are so apposite and conclusive, that in giving them place here the author must be allowed to speak in his own words:—

“Sound Port wine acts as a powerful preventive on relaxed and low inflammatory states of the bowels, by promoting the tone, strength, and vigour of the system, and enabling it to overcome the predisposing causes of debility. Some years ago, before the nervous temperament became weakened by the long continuance of relaxing seasons, and low diseases of the mucous membranes, the stomach required the stimulus of a moderate use of ardent spirits; but of late years this has been found too hot for the tender state of those membranes, and too evanescent and debilitating for the nerves. Such has been the damp, close, and depressing state of recent seasons, without a due continuance of frost in the winters, that low diseases have been wandering from place to place among the very cattle in the fields. The use, then, of good wine, and particularly of generous Port, is imperatively called for, not only for the cure of the diseases now prevailing, but for their prevention, and for the preservation of health. God help those who cannot afford it! for neither porter, ale, nor gin will supply its place. I must be excused for entering into this digression respecting the necessity and utility of wine, when I assure my readers, that in some cases of the severest spasms I ever witnessed, arising from incipient or precursory attacks of the present invading cholera, a draught (two or three glasses) of good Port put in a tumbler, and drank off cold and at once, has carried the spasms off like a miracle, and was often succeeded by calm sleep.

“Ale is sometimes employed, I suppose for economy’s sake, as a substitute for wine, and it has been fashionable, without proof, to eulogize its effects. The habitual

use of ale seldom fails, sooner or later, to affect the brain. In recent colds and dry coughs it binds the chest, and prevents expectoration. At the commencement of an attack of dysentery it does good, where the use of Port is not so admissible; but in its chronic state, where Port wine is of great service, ale does harm. Although it affords a temporary strength, gives a florid complexion, and is supposed to be a nourisher of the blood, yet nothing can be more enfeebling to the nervous system, or causes more gloom or despondency to the mind than ale, particularly in persons of bilious and melancholic habits. This mental depression produces the demand for stronger stimulants, and is one of the greatest inducements to dram-drinking. It would be of the greatest benefit to those who have shaken their nervous system by the free use of ardent spirits, or by immoderate indulgence in malt liquor, to have their minds exhilarated, and the energies of their nerves invigorated and established, by the use of generous Port wine alone." * Wine may thus in a great measure be made to supersede some of the stimulants ordinarily employed in the relief of fever, for which indeed it has one advantage over all others, of being generally agreeable to the palate. Many a man has persuaded himself that he had flying gout for the sake of the remedy, when old Madeira was the fashionable specific for that malady.

CONCLUSION.

Having now well-nigh drained our fountain to the lees, this slight and imperfect labour cannot, perhaps, be more appropriately terminated than by echoing the

* *Remarks on the Prevention and Treatment of Cholera*, by Dr. Richardson.

recorded opinion of the learned and illustrious Professor von Liebig, who writes, "Alcohol stands high as a respiratory material. Its use enables us to dispense with the starch and sugar in our food, and is irreconcilable with that of fat. Spirits, by their action on the nerves, enable a man to make up the passing deficient power at the expense of his body. Wine as a restorative,—as a means of refreshment where the powers of life are exhausted,—of giving animation and energy where man has to struggle with days of trial and sorrow,—as a means of correction and compensation where misproportion occurs in nutrition,—and as a protection against transient organic disturbance, wine is surpassed by no product of nature or of art." We have further seen, that the use of wine as a beverage dates from the remotest antiquity, and has resolved itself into a primary necessary of life. Bread and wine, indeed, have been associated together even from the creation of the world. Medicine and science have rendered homage to the beneficent properties of the juice of the grape, which is now not only recognised and administered undiluted as a restorative for the convalescent, and a safe stimulant and reviver for the sick, but dispensed as a positive specific in some diseases; whilst its harmlessness generally, when not indulged in to excess, is undeniable. In many affections of the body, wine is of more service than any thing physicians can point to in their pharmacopœias. It enables the system to resist the exhaustive attacks of intermittent and malignant fever, and in innumerable cases its application has proved salutary and beneficial. As in early ages "oil and wine," esteemed in those times as highly sanative, were often applied, probably

mingled together, in the healing of bodily injuries, so in France, besides being employed as a medium for administering delicate medicaments, such as opium, iodine, quinine, confections, &c., red wine is often prescribed by medical practitioners as an efficacious remedy for wounds, ulcers, and other external ailments.

Considering wine, then, as one of the great gifts of Providence to man, — considering what a place it occupies among the means of his subsistence, — considering how many useful and wholesome ends it subserves in connexion with his physical temperament, — considering its utility as a competing liquor with demoralizing ardent spirits, — it will hardly be thought visionary to anticipate, or unwise to promote an augmenting preference, and its more extended use, among the several classes of England's industrial community.

“Oh ! for a beaker full of the warm south, —
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
And purple-stained mouth, —
That I might drink.”

Keats.



APPENDIX.



Modern Wines analytically considered.

ONE of the earliest results attendant on the recent reformation of the duty on foreign wines was the introduction of many wholesome vintages, which by the operation of high imposts were previously excluded from this country. Some of these arrive light and pure as nature yielded them; they are well-flavoured, limpid, spirituous, and fragrant, and it would be not a little singular if, on so seemingly trivial an incident, hinged the first step towards a revolution in national appreciation and preference. For many generations the English community have been limited to an acquaintance with some half-dozen favourite vintages, until use has not only reconciled the palate to a single standard of flavour and quality, but obscured the judgment and baffled discernment as to the higher attributes of vinous excellence. New sources of comparison are now open to them, and whilst the faintest whisper against the supremacy of Port and Sherry might be met with a derisive smile, and still regarded as rank heresy, the time may not be far distant when established notions will undergo considerable modification as to the essentials necessary to constitute a good and perfect wine.

It is a well-known truth, that the elementary properties which constitute the distinctive characteristics of wine are derived primarily from the alcohol which is innate in every class and vintage, the amount of natural

spirit produced being in exact proportion to the quantity of sugar contained in the grapes. The actual result, however, is not entirely dependent on the saccharine contents of the fruit, for as fermentation is excited by the albuminous matters which exist in the grape-juice, on these the quantity of pure spirit deducible partially depends. Three cases may here be compared,—

1. Either the amount of sugar exceeds that of the albuminous matter which is to be converted into sugar, and then the wine remains sweet after fermentation, since it still contains undecomposed sugar;

2. Or the proportion of albumen to be resolved into ferment is greater, and then nearly all the sugar will be decomposed, and the wine will remain slightly acid;

3. Or the quantity of sugar and of substances convertible into ferment are equal, in which case the wine retains something of each, and is not acid.

Liqueur wines exemplify the first, Rhine wine the second, and Burgundy the third.

But a still greater distinction must be made, for where much sugar and a large proportion of the vegetable extracts abound, the wine will be strong and rich in its amount of alcohol; when less of these substances exist, the wine will be of a proportionably lower standard, and still weaker if only a small portion of either be present. Yet it is not possible, even when sugar and ferment are in excess, to produce an alcoholic liquid of any strength that may be wished, for when a certain amount of spirit has been evolved, further activity of the ferment is hindered by it, notwithstanding surplus sugar may still be present.—*Mulder.*

The proportion of spirit needed for the preservation of wine has long been a matter of controversy and

doubt, and to determine the problem in a satisfactory manner, a commission emanating from the British government was directed in 1861 to inquire "into the strengths of wine in the principal wine-growing countries in Europe," and the results of this inquest are likely to be attended with consequences of no little import. The tabular statements subjoined will serve to illustrate the value of the information thus officially gathered, and the facts there recorded have been since supplemented by the careful analyses of Dr. J. B. Keene, to whom was remitted the arduous task of testing the various wines sent to the International Exhibition of 1862. His able "Report to the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs" registers the fact, that great extremes of strength are not unusual in wines of the same country. One sample from the Roman States, for instance, indicated an alcoholic strength of no less than 52·7 per cent., another from Sicily gave 46·5, and one from Piedmont 43·1; Algeria also supplied one which contained 45·2 per cent. Each of these samples, however, it must be admitted, partook more of the character of a *liqueur*, being sweet and highly brandied. Others of a less, but still high degree of strength, were professedly imitations of fortified wines, such as Port, Sherry, Madeira, &c. Piedmont, on the other hand, furnished a sparkling red wine of a low class, which only gave a strength of 7·7 per cent.; and even Hungary sent one sample among her choicest sorts which did not exceed 7·2 per cent. This last, a red wine named *Mènes Essenz*, was from the district of Arad, and the produce of selected grapes, the juice of which is extracted by the mere weight of the mass, without further pressure. One effect of this mode of treatment is, that more sugar and less of the muc-

luginous ferment and acids of the grape are present in the must, and the spirit educed is necessarily small in quantity. In testing this sample, when about two-thirds of its bulk was distilled over, the residuum became so thick as to endanger the retort; and when cold, it formed a hard amorphous mass, of an intense brown colour, proving the very large preponderance of sugar. On taking the average strength of the weakest wines of each country, (omitting the two latter exceptional samples,) it was found in every instance to exceed the minimum originally fixed for the new wine tariff, namely 18 degrees, the lowest being—

In Italy	19.5		In France	19.0
„ the Zollverein	19.7		„ the Austrian empire	18.4
and in the Australian colonies			21.3.	

It is not improbable, however, that when the foreigner considered 18 degrees as a sufficient limit, it was with reference to the French standard of computation, which by the table would equal 28 per cent. of proof spirit.

It is much to be regretted that, in a matter of such moment, some of the more prominent wine countries should have been unrepresented; for not only were the Spanish and Portuguese vintages absent, but also the Greek, Russian, and several other kinds hitherto comparatively unknown, an official scrutiny of which would have been interesting and valuable. Still the analyst's list was a large one, for it comprised in all no less than 569 varieties, and were thus divided :—

France	331		Austria	41
Italy	112		The Zollverein	67
Australia			18.	

From the evidence afforded by these numerous experiments Dr. Keene was induced to infer, that if the

wines thus tested were previously strengthened by an admixture of raw spirit, it must have been in a much smaller ratio than is customary with the ordinary produce of Spain and Portugal; and as it may be assumed that most of them indicated the true average quality of their respective growths, it is tolerably manifest that a large addition of extrinsic spirit is not indispensable for the preservation of any wine.

Three of the samples tested were altogether exceptional. The first two were called *Wine of Water*, from Bavaria, one of which is said to be produced at twopence the bottle, the other at threepence. The former was a light agreeable drink, with 19·6 per cent. of spirit; the latter was sweeter, of better body, and its alcoholic contents 29·9 per cent. The third exceptional sample was a mead or metheglin, a honey wine called *Alt Deutscher Meth*. This, according to our Customs tariff, is free of duty; yet it had no less than 29·2 per cent. of proof spirit, at which strength wine would be liable to 2s. 6d. per gallon duty.

A few samples were remarkable for their great age. A *vin d'Alicante*, from the department of the Gard, vintage 1801, yielded 33·3 per cent. of spirit; a red wine from Luz, in the same department, dated 1811, 23·9 per cent.; and one called La Marigny, from the Indre et Loire district, 18·9 per cent. Another sample from Libourne, in the Gironde, was of the vintage of 1783, and its strength 19·6. These, however, are but young in comparison with one from the Tarn department, which had attained the venerable age of 111 years, retaining a strength equal to 18·9 per cent. This last, though still sound and healthy, possessed little or no character, and from the complete exhaustion of the sugar, and the

greater prominence thus given to the tannic acid, it had a decided bitter taste.—*Rule Tabular Statements.*

The earnest spirit of inquiry now directed to the nature and proper characteristics of pure and unadulterate wine, is laying a sure foundation for the reversal of many deep-rooted opinions; but as it usually takes a long time to establish a new truth or to abolish an old custom, a generation may pass away before a decisive change for the better will become paramount. Meanwhile, a silent revulsion of opinion on the merits of truly vinous beverages is sinking deeply in the social bosom, and to this end many circumstances fortuitously conspire. The unwonted and superior means afforded by novel importations for investigation and comparison are fairly exercised; new and unsuspected facts are recognised, past prejudice dispelled, and numbers are acquiring, they scarcely know how, a gradual disrelish for sophisticated and high-seasoned vintages. That the intelligent judgment of the medical faculty is opposed to the use of wines adventitiously strengthened may be discerned in the pages of Dr. Brinton's work *On Food*, where we read, "In name, at least, Port and Sherry rank as among the *wines*, of which liquids they have till recently been the sole representatives with the mass of our nation. But it is doubtful whether, as a matter either of chemistry or of dietetics, they fairly deserve this title. Sherry, for example, is understood to be composed of various wines, so mixed and incorporated as to suit the prevailing taste of the British consumer, —wines, some of which are artificially strengthened by evaporation, while others are coloured (innocently enough) by burnt sugar. So far as the preparation of Madeira implies any similar mixture or reinforcement, it too must be

ranked less among the wines than among the *liqueurs*, of which, indeed, it deserves, on every ground, to be regarded as the chief. The addition of brandy to wine is of course a rank adulteration, which, physically, may be mitigated by the incorporation brought about in course of time, as a slow continuous fermentation of the whole mixture, but, morally, remains always indefensible. As regards Port wine, the exact composition and sources of this orthodox beverage are still a profound mystery to scientific chemists, even in the case of that moderate proportion of the liquids bearing this name which is believed to be really imported from any wine-growing country. Assuming it to be vinous, we may estimate its alcohol as tolerably corresponding with that of Sherry and Madeira, in amounting to a proportion nearly double (20 parts per cent.) that of the ordinary natural wines of the country."—p. 372. Again, "In the physiological effects of these various liquids the proportion of alcohol plays a prominent, but by no means exclusive part. Hence, though we may trace something like a gradation of activity in passing down that alcoholic scale which conducts from the strongest distilled spirit to the weakest beer, we find some differences which are specific to the three classes of spirits, wines, and beers; as well as others which apparently depend, in great degree, on the relative proportions of the above collateral ingredients. The quantity of sugar, for instance, is evidently of importance, and in general greatly increases the noxious effects of the liquid in which it is largely present, acting in this respect as no mere admixture of sugar with the food would do. The æthers and the tannic acid, as well as the tartaric acid and the tartrates of wine, are also doubtless of importance, and seem to confer upon it that rich and

multifarious composition by which this great medicine so far transcends all that we sometimes attempt in our pharmaceutical combinations of many drugs. Lastly, there is the clearest evidence that another quality—which, for want of a better word, we may call *naturalness*—of wine is still more influential; and that this character (in the exact appreciation of which the chemist must at present be content to rank below the connoisseur, and the connoisseur in his turn below the sensations which follow a moderate dose, or the constitutional effects experienced by the habitual consumer) is the only one which guarantees that proper combination of stimulant, tonic, and alterative effects distinctive of the action of wine.”

Public opinion in general may not yet be sufficiently advanced to recognise the validity of truths like these, or to tolerate their open promulgation; but when it shall be more clearly and generally perceived that the highest properties of vinous perfection can be realized only in wines that are pure, natural, and unalloyed, all will be ready to admit that a morbid and perverted taste has been too long pandered to. We do not close our eyes to the formidable obstacles that invariably surround either an attempt to remove a cherished fallacy, or a laudable desire to introduce a new vintage, however superior it may be, nor overlook the many instances on record of failure and loss. But the truth is, that on all such occasions the right material was wanting, and whilst the evil complained of was fully recognised, the proffered substitute too often fell short of expectation. Through the instrumentality of augmented mercantile facilities the difficulty is in a fair way of early solution, and it remains to be seen, whether previous notions and habits are infallible and invincible,

or whether England will continue true to her progressive policy whenever science shall announce a new truth, or commercial enterprise herald a fresh discovery.

The following table, abridged from the official returns of the Board of Trade, shows not only the immediate effects of a reduced duty on some of the leading wines in use in this country, but exhibits the silent workings of gradual change in one direction, and clearly indicates the tendency of public taste towards purer vintages.

*Relative proportion of Wines taken for Home Consumption,
1794 to 1862.*

Period.	Portugal.	French.	Spanish.	Rhenish.	Period.	Portugal.	French.	Spanish.	Rhenish.
1794	75.67	3.26	16.67	0.38	1840	40.72	5.21	38.16	0.92
1796	69.44	0.81	26.81	0.02	1845	39.91	6.58	37.93	0.93
1800	75.90	0.99	19.43	0.19	1850	43.73	5.29	38.36	0.85
1805	65.55	1.88	25.44	0.17	1854	34.39	8.12	38.34	1.01
1815	59.92	4.34	21.50	0.43	1858	28.69	8.54	39.67	1.47
1820	51.49	3.58	20.46	0.57	1859	27.82	9.58	39.60	1.72
1825	52.45	6.56	22.86	1.34	1860	24.14	15.30	40.44	3.03
1830	44.60	4.79	32.35	1.06	1861	25.06	20.65	37.38	3.20
1835	43.30	4.23	34.74	0.70	1862	23.97	19.38	40.35	3.22

As the principle of fermentation is of vital importance in the natural economy of wine, these pages should not close without some reference to a novel theory announced by M. Pasteur, a Parisian chemist, whose recent publications* reveal some exceedingly curious entomological facts. He endeavours to prove that the phenomena of fermentation owe their origin to the generation in the liquid of countless animalculæ, the germs of which are constantly floating in the atmosphere; and his first inquiry was directed to a solution of the difficult question

* *Mémoires sur la Fermentation Alcoolique; Examen de la Doctrine des Générations spontanées; &c.*

as to whether their birth was effected by a spontaneous act of their own, or could be satisfactorily accounted for by the ordinary laws of reproduction.

By perseverance, repeated experiments, and the aid of the microscope, M. Pasteur at length succeeded in detecting several species of atmospheric infusoria, whose functions and habits he minutely describes. *Monades* and *vibrions*, he says, abound in the open air, and *bacterium*, and more especially the *bacterium termo*, pervade the atmosphere in incalculable profusion. This little being is further stated to be ever present in all substances undergoing putrefaction, and to take an active part in the process of decomposition.

It has long been held, on the authority of Berzelius and Liebig, that ferment was a sensitive and variable substance, endued with the power of exciting the derangement of the organic matter with which it is mixed. The adhesion of its own molecules being but slight, it was thought that the addition of ferment simply disturbed their equilibrium, and that this intestine devolution, commenced at one point, quickly propagated itself over the whole mass,—a movement attributed to the sole action of *contact*. But alcoholic fermentation, M. Pasteur contends, has not the simplicity commonly attributed to it, but needs the additional elements pointed out by him; and once in action, fermentation will in some degree continue as long as a particle of undecomposed sugar remains in the liquor. The alcohol and carbonic acid formed meanwhile, he looks upon as the excretions of these little insect beings.

The ferment which serves to transform the sugar into butyric acid is not a vegetable, but a small infusorial animal, first discernible, observes M. Pasteur, in the form of minute cylindrical spikes, rounded at the ends,

either isolated, or united in chains of many links. They are in constant motion, gliding, pirouetting, undulating, or floating everywhere in the liquor, and propagate freely by fissiparity, or self-division. These atomic beings are *vibrions*, and will generate in fluids containing neither sugar, ammonia, nor phosphate, for they can draw their nutrition and thrive on either crystalline or mineral substances. But the most singular point of their organization is, that these little vibrions possess the faculty of living and multiplying without the assistance of an atom of free oxygen. Not only do they live without air, but free exposure to it immediately kills them. A totally opposite property distinguishes the *mycodermes*, a species of mouldy zoophyte, that feed without ceasing on the oxygen around them, and borrowing it from the atmosphere when they can find no more in the solution. Thus the pioneers of fermentation comprise two classes of animal life, the one nourished entirely by oxygen, the other supported without it: both are needful to the active decomposition of bodies, and their labours are often concurrent. They have for their mission the restoration to the atmosphere or to the mineral kingdom of every thing that has ceased to live; for, as M. Pasteur forcibly remarks, "the primary elements of life would be in some sort indestructible, if we could suppress certain infinitesimal beings, which God has created the smallest in size, as well as the most useless in appearance."

The decomposition effected through the active agency of these animalculæ differs in nothing from what in animal remains is called *putrefaction*. The vibrions, of which there are no less than six species, are the great and insatiable destroyers of every decaying substance.

To this end, the work is prepared for them by yet smaller infusoria, known as *monas corpusculum* and *bacterium termo*: the vibrions then deprive the compound of its azotized matter, and convert the organic remains into other substances of a more simple nature.* On the other hand, the *bacterium* or the *mucilines* burn up these new products by means of the oxygen they disengage from the atmosphere, and restore them to the more simple binary conditions of water of ammonia and carbonic acid.

Whatever value may hereafter attach to these recondite views of M. Pasteur, they have attracted the earnest attention and approval of naturalists, so important does it seem to them to secure the missing link between the physical and the organized systems, between the body which furnishes the materials of life and the principles of existence itself. In the very bosom of matter, in that nameless abyss from whence issue all form and all action, we are driven to seek for the power which, asleep in the crystal, shall wake up in the plant and in animal life. His discoveries, if established, are of sufficient magnitude to divest preceding theories of all scientific value, as well as the hypothesis that life is engendered from inorganic matter without the intervention of germs derived from the hereditary principle of transmissibility of species.

* In connexion with this subject it may be observed, that M. Tigris has recently presented to the French Academy some experimental observations, upon which he also bases an opinion that, in human blood during special kinds of illness, infusoria of the genus *bacterium* are developed during life; and that others of the genera *vibrio* and *monas* show themselves after death, and are active agents in putrefaction.

Particulars in Relation to the Government Wine Commission.

The official reports of the Commissioners appointed by the Board of Customs to visit the wine-producing countries of Europe minutely describe the particulars of the several samples procured by them with a view to determine, as far as practicable, what may be deemed the greatest natural strength of wine. The following presents a brief summary of the result of the testing in this country of the several samples transmitted. The total number received and examined amounted to 125 :

From France . . .	56	From Bavaria . . .	4
" Spain . . .	18	" Switzerland . . .	3
" Portugal . . .	13	" Naples . . .	2
" Germany . . .	7	" Papal States . . .	4
" Hungary . . .	11	" Sicily . . .	2
" Austria . . .	5	Total . . .	125

Of these samples 14 represent wine containing less than 18 per cent.

89	"	"	18 and less than 26	"
22	"	"	26	" " 40 "

The strongest samples from each country contained the following per-centages of spirit; viz.

From Spain (or excl. 37·5 the Malaga sample) 33·3	From Naples . . .	23·9
From Hungary . . . 28·6	" Austria . . .	23·3
" Sicily . . . 29·9	" Germany . . .	22·7
" Portugal . . . 27·2	" Bavaria . . .	22·0
" France . . . 27·9	" Papal States . . .	20·8
	" Switzerland . . .	18·3

The wine which gave the highest per-centage of spirit was from Malaga, a product of the year 1847 after very extensive pruning of the vine, and for that reason must be regarded as an exceptional case. The next strongest pure wines, containing respectively 33·3 and 32·0 per cent. of spirit, were samples of Montilla, vintage of 1840 and 1845. There was no reason to doubt their purity, and as the strength was ascertained by a double process with exactly the same result, 33·3 per cent. may be taken as the greatest quantity of spirit in any European natural wine.

The above wines were not selected with a view to represent the general production of the countries of their growth, but simply such as were known to contain, in their natural condition, the greatest quantity of spirit, the purpose of the mission being to inquire as to the highest natural strength of wines.

Analytical Particulars of the Samples obtained by Mr. Commissioner Bernard in Spain and Portugal, showing the average Strength of the Wines of each District.

WINES OF SPAIN.

Name of Wine.	District.	Natural Wine.	Fortified for England.	Name of Wine.	District.	Natural Wine.	Fortified for England.
Vino fino . .	St. Lucar	27.0	—	Montilla . .	Montilla	31.7	—
Sherry . . .	Xeres	27.2	—	Valencia . .	Valencia	27.2	28.6
Amontillado .	St. Mary's	32.3	35.7	Benicarlo . .	Benicarlo	23.9	31.8
Val de Penas, red . .		27.9	—	Alicante . .	Alicante	28.9	—
Val de Penas, white .		26.7	—	Malaga . .	Malaga	37.5	—
PORTUGAL.							
Port	Evidosa	24.6	—	Port	Villa Nova	25.9	35.4
Port	Corvas	22.0	—	Port	Douro	23.9	—
Port	Alto Douro	21.4	—	Figueiras . .	Beira	20.8	—
Port	Pezo	23.3	—	Figueiras . .	Beirada	22.6	—

WINES OF FRANCE.

Mr. R. A. Ogilvie

Description of Wine.	1858.	1859.	1860.
	Proof spirit	per cent.	per cent.
Château Lafitte	16.5	17.7	14.8
St. Julien (Langoa) . . .	17.7	17.7	16.0
St. Julien (Palmer) . . .	17.1	17.7	16.0
St. Estèphe (supérieur) . .	17.7	18.3	13.7
Médoc (paysan)	17.7	18.3	14.8
Graves	17.7	18.3	14.2
St. Emilion (supérieur) . .	18.9	18.9	16.0
St. Emilion (bourgeois) . .	16.5	15.4	16.0
Blaye (bourgeois)	18.3	17.1	14.8
Blaye (paysan)	17.1	17.1	14.8
Latour (blanche)	23.9	26.5	20.8

GERMAN AND HUNGARIAN WINES.

Mr. J. W. Douglas.

SICILIAN AND ITALIAN WINES.

Mr. F. Davies.

Name of the Wine.	Year of Vintage.	Strength.	Name of the Wine.	Year of Vintage.	Strength.
Rüdesheimer	1857	22.0	Faro wine	1860	22.7
Marcobrunner	"	22.0	Terre Forte	1859	29.9
Sparkling Hock	"	21.4	Marsala	1852	30.6
Sparkling Moselle . . .	1857	19.6	Lacryma Christi . .	1860	18.9
Stein Reislinger (Bava.)	"	21.4	Gallipoli	1860	26.5
Buda wine	1852	20.2	Taranto	1860	23.9
Szegszárd wine	1841	20.8	Genzano, red (Roman)	1850	20.2
Menès	1856	28.6	Genzano, white . . .	1850	20.8
Menès	1848	25.2	Genzano, do. . . .	1861	17.1
Paulis	1855	23.3	Marino	1861	17.7
Tokay	1811	21.4	Montepulciano . . .	"	17.7
Luttenberger (Austria)	1822	17.1	Vino Nobile (Tuscan)	1861	17.7

ABSTRACT of the average Strength of Wines of France shown at the International Exhibition of 1862, and afterwards analyzed by Dr. J. B. Keene.

SEAT OF GROWTH.	Colour.	Proof Spirit per cent.			No. of Samples tested.	Average Strength per Gay-Lussac.
		Greatest Strength.	Least Strength.	Average.		
Département d'Allier	red	19.6	18.9	19.2	2	11.0
" Var	"	23.9	19.6	22.1	8	12.4
" do.	white	23.9	18.9	21.6	3	12.4
" l'Aude	red	—	—	25.9	1	14.9
" Gard	"	33.3	19.6	26.8	5	15.4
" do.	white	29.9	24.6	27.9	4	16.0
" Loire Inférieure	"	19.6	18.9	19.2	2	11.0
" Bas Rhin	"	19.6	16.5	17.9	4	10.3
" Haut Rhin	"	21.4	18.9	19.8	5	11.4
" Tarn et Garonne	red	25.2	17.1	20.8	11	12.0
" do. do.	white	—	—	26.5	1	15.2
" Loiret	red	19.6	15.4	17.7	11	10.2
" Vienne	"	—	—	20.2	1	11.6
" Indre et Loire	"	23.3	17.1	19.7	12	11.4
" do. do.	white	22.7	18.3	20.5	2	11.8
" Dordogne	red	23.3	17.1	20.3	10	11.7
" do.	white	27.2	14.8	22.6	11	13.0
" Indre	red	20.2	16.5	18.0	6	10.4
" Tarn	"	26.5	18.9	23.7	3	13.6
" do.	white	—	—	17.1	1	9.8
" Moselle	red	—	—	18.9	1	10.9
" Haute Garonne	"	—	—	22.0	1	12.6
" Lot	"	23.9	17.7	20.8	2	12.0
" Maine et Loire	white	22.7	16.0	18.2	3	10.6
" Sarthe	"	—	—	17.1	1	9.8
" Puy de Dôme	red	25.9	19.6	22.7	2	13.1
" Vaucluse	"	27.9	24.6	26.4	4	15.2
" Ardèche (St. Peray)	white	—	—	27.2	1	16.4
" Drôme	red	25.9	12.0	21.6	6	12.5
" do.	white	25.9	14.2	21.1	3	12.2
" Hérault	red	34.0	17.7	23.6	5	13.6
" do.	white	35.4	20.8	25.6	5	14.8
" Beaujolais	red	23.3	18.3	21.0	12	12.1
" Cher	"	20.8	17.1	19.3	4	11.1
" Loire et Cher	"	21.4	14.8	17.6	7	10.1
" do. do.	white	24.6	15.4	20.1	5	11.6
" Jura	"	27.9	22.7	25.3	2	14.6
" Gironde	red	23.3	14.8	19.5	45	11.2
" do.	white	27.2	17.1	22.8	11	13.1
" Isère	"	—	—	21.4	1	12.4
" Saône et Loire	red	22.7	17.7	20.7	26	11.9
" do. do.	white	23.9	18.9	21.9	12	12.6
" Yonne	red	22.0	14.8	18.7	27	10.8
" do.	white	22.0	18.3	20.5	4	11.8
" Corsica	red	27.9	20.8	24.9	3	14.4
" do.	white	—	—	32.6	1	18.8
" Algérie	red	27.2	17.1	22.1	11	12.7
" do.	white	45.2	19.6	26.8	15	15.4

*ABSTRACT of the Strength of French and Hungarian Wines
shown at the International Exhibition of 1862, and analyzed by
Dr. J. B. Keene.*

WINES OF FRANCE.

Wine.	District.	Vintage.	Colour.	Strength
Vin de Tokaj . . .	Niames	—	white	29.9
Vin Rouge . . .	do.	1855	red	19.6
Vin Blanc . . .	Hyère	1859	white	22.0
Vin Rouge . . .	Roquebrune	1860	red	23.9
Vin Blanc mousseux . . .	Saumur	—	white	22.7
Vin Rouge . . .	Narbonne	1857	red	25.8
Vin de l'Ermitage . . .	Tain	1833	"	25.9
do. do. . .	do.	1848	white	25.9
do. do. . .	St. Georges	1834	red	23.9
Riesling . . .	Wolxheimer	1857	white	16.5
Vin Muscat . . .	Lunel-Viel	1837	"	23.3
do. . .	Frontignan	—	"	22.7
Alicante (vieux) . . .	Beziers	—	"	20.8
Vin de Montplaisir . . .	Grisolle	1847	red	20.8
Vin de Fleurie . . .	Vivier	1858	"	22.0
St. Emilion . . .	Libourne	1847	"	22.0
Graves Pomerol (1er crû)	do.	1854	"	19.6
Château Margaux . . .	Médoc	1825	"	20.2
St. Estèphe . . .	do.	1848	"	19.6
Pouilly . . .	Mâcon	1846	white	23.9
Vin de Lavernette . . .	Mâconnais	1854	red	19.6
Vin de Chablis . . .	Chablis	1857	white	22.0
Vin Rouge . . .	Corsica	1858	red	22.0
Corse de Tallano . . .	do.	1845	"	27.9
Vin Blanc . . .	Algérie	1859	white	25.2
Vin Muscat . . .	do.	1860	"	27.9
Vin Rouge . . .	do.	1860	red	22.7
Vin Clair . . .	do.	1859	"	23.3

WINES OF HUNGARY.

Tokaj . . .	Tokaj	1858	white	25.9
do. (dry) . . .	Molnar es Torok	1852	"	24.6
Mènes Essenz . . .	Arad	1856	red	7.2
do. do. . .	do.	1856	"	27.9
Eger . . .	Erlau	1857	"	23.9
Bakator . . .	Ermellek	1852	white	22.0
Badatson . . .	Balaton	1857	"	18.9
Neszmély . . .	Neszmel	1846	"	21.4
Palank . . .	Szegszard	1857	red	20.2
Vilagos . . .	Arad Mountains	1837	white	16.0
Visonta . . .	Visonta	1858	red	22.7
Meslès . . .	Tolna Szegszard	1858	white	21.4
Buda Sashegyi . . .	Ofner	1858	red	21.4
Schomlauer . . .	Wien	1857	white	22.0
Ofner Rothwein . . .	do.	1857	red	18.9
Ruster Ausbruch . . .	do.	1857	white	23.9
Liebfrauenmilch . . .	do.	1834	"	19.6
Ruster Muscat . . .	do.	1834	"	17.1
Hungarian Champagne . . .	Pesten	1857	"	20.2
Vin Rouge . . .	Battászék	1857	red	22.7

ABSTRACT of the average Strength of Wines of various Countries shown at the International Exhibition of 1862, and subsequently analyzed by Dr. Keene.

SEAT OF GROWTH.	Colour.	Proof Spirit per cent.			Average Strength per Gay-Lussac.	No. of Samples tested.
		Greatest Strength.	Least Strength.	Average.		
ITALY, viz.—						
Piedmont	red	27·9	7·7	20·9	12·1	80
do.	white	43·1	13·1	24·9	14·4	29
Lombardy	red	20·8	18·9	19·9	11·5	3
do.	white	—	—	22·0	12·7	1
Naples	red	28·6	15·4	23·7	13·6	13
do.	white	40·8	12·0	25·4	14·6	18
Roman States . .	red	17·1	16·5	16·8	9·7	2
do. do.	white	52·7	18·9	29·8	17·2	6
Tuscany	red	22·0	16·5	20·4	11·8	5
do.	white	32·0	28·6	29·7	17·1	3
Sicily	red	30·6	26·5	28·5	16·4	2
do.	white	46·5	26·5	31·7	18·2	5
The ZOLLVEREIN, viz.—						
Baden	red	22·0	18·3	19·9	11·5	6
do.	white	21·4	17·7	19·3	11·1	15
Württemberg . .	red	18·3	17·1	17·6	10·1	6
ditto	white	25·2	15·4	18·1	10·4	22
Rhenish Prussia .	red	—	—	20·8	12·0	1
do. do.	white	22·7	18·3	20·1	11·6	12
Bavaria	"	22·7	21·4	22·1	12·8	2
do. (Wine of Water)	"	29·9	19·6	24·8	14·3	2
AUSTRIAN EMPIRE, viz.—						
Austria Proper . .	red	27·9	18·9	21·8	12·6	5
do. do.	white	28·6	12·0	21·0	12·1	4
Moravia	"	19·6	16·5	17·7	10·2	3
Styria	"	—	—	19·6	11·3	1
Transylvania . .	"	—	—	27·2	15·6	1
Hungary	red	27·9	7·2	20·5	11·8	11
do.	white	25·9	16·0	21·3	12·3	16
AUSTRALIA, viz.—						
New South Wales .	red	—	—	25·9	14·9	2
do do.	white	24·6	18·9	22·7	13·0	4
Victoria	red	28·6	20·2	23·3	13·4	7
do.	white	27·9	20·2	25·6	14·7	5
Mataro, Victoria .	red	—	—	20·2	11·7	1
Frontignac, do. .	"	—	—	22·0	12·7	1
Hermitage, do. .	"	—	—	20·8	12·0	1
Burgundy, do. .	"	28·9	28·6	26·7	15·3	2
Red Victoria . .	"	—	—	28·6	16·5	1
White do.	white	—	—	25·9	14·9	1
Tokay	"	—	—	27·9	16·0	1
White Pineau . .	"	—	—	24·6	14·1	1
Australian Sauterne	"	—	—	20·2	11·6	1
Chasselas	"	—	—	24·6	14·1	1

Comparative Value of French and English Degrees of Alcoholic Strength.

The different modes of expressing the strength of liquors adopted in England and France, is the source of much inconvenience and confusion. In both countries the operation of testing or trying the strength is by distillation of a determinate quantity, and then taking the temperature and density of the distillate by thermometers and hydrometer, but here the similarity ends. The instruments, as used in the two countries, differ essentially, and therefore the results are shown in different terms. In England Fahrenheit's thermometer and Sykes' hydrometer are used; in France, the Centigrade thermometer and Gay-Lussac's hydrometer. These thermometers differ in the fact, that the range between the temperature of frozen and boiling water is divided in the latter (Centigrade) into 100 parts or degrees, and in the former into 180. Gay-Lussac's hydrometer is graduated to show 100 divisions or degrees between absolute alcohol of 796 specific gravity, at 15° Centigrade or 60° Fahrenheit, and pure water; while the scale of Sykes' hydrometer starts from a definite mixture of water and pure alcohol, nearly in equal volumes, having a specific gravity of 920 at 60° Fahrenheit, and called proof spirit, and the instrument shows whether the spirit under test is of greater or less strength than such proof. In various scientific works tables are given of the equivalent degrees of these two scales, but none of them exactly correspond. The following figures are very nearly exact:—

Sykes.	Gay-Lussac.	Sykes.	Gay-Lussac.	Sykes.	Gay-Lussac.
1	0.5	9.5	6.5	21.5	13
2	1	11	7	23	14
3	2	13	8	24	15
4	3	15	9	25	16
4.5	3.5	16.5	9.75	26.5	17
5	4	18	10.5	28	18
6.5	5	19	11.5	30	19
8	6	20	12	32	20

Under the excise laws of France, wine generally is not allowed to be fortified for home consumption; but, under certain limitations, spirit to the extent of 5 per cent. may be added to the produce of the eastern Pyrenees, the Aude, the Tarn, the Hérault, the Gard, and the Rhône. All wines for exportation may be fortified without restriction, and most vintages are so strengthened before being shipped,—Roussillon wines for Brazil to the extent of 10 per. cent.; and for England from 5 to 8 per cent.

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